

Scandals, Shamans, and Samsung:

framing analysis of media coverage on the Choi Soon-sil Gate

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Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract <p>Tutkielma analysoi kahden korealaisen sanomalehden, Hankyoreh ja JoongAng, uutisointia Etelä-Korean entisestä presidentistä Park Geun-hyesta ja Choi Soon-silista lahjonta- ja korruptioskandaalissa, johon liittyi myös Samsung Electronic:sin varapuheenjohtaja Jay Y. Lee. Artikkelit ja niistä tehty analyysi keskittyvät näihin kolmeen henkilöön. Lehdistä Hankyoreh edustaa liberaalia poliittista suuntausta, kun taas JoongAng on konservatiivinen sanomalehti, jolla on myös suorat perhesiteet Samsungiin. Nämä kaksi sanomalehteä valittiin tarkoituksella edustamaan kahta eri poliittista linjaa sillä oletuksella, että liberaali sanomalehti käsittelee konservatiivisen presidentin skandaalia eri tavalla kuin konservatiivinen media.</p> <p>Analysoidut artikkelit sijoittuvat aikavälille lokakuusta 2016 maaliskuuhun 2017. Artikkelit kerättiin internetistä ja analysoidaan käyttäen metodeina framing-analyysia ja kriittistä diskurssianalyysia. Analyysi muodostuu sekä kvalitatiivisista että kvantitatiivisista elementeistä. Tuloksia vertaillaan myös aiempaan tutkimukseen liittyen erityisesti korealaisen lehdistön aiempaan sananvapauteen ja kykyyn toimia yhteiskunnassa väärinkäytösten paljastajana. Korealaisella lehdistöllä on aiemmin ollut suuria vaikeuksia kirjoittaa negatiivisesti erityisesti Samsungin kaltaisista taloudellisen vallan käyttäjistä, joten yksi tutkimuksen tavoitteista on paljastaa, kuinka nämä kaksi lehteä uutisoivat Leesta erityisesti verrattuna Choihin ja Parkiin.</p> <p>Artikkeleita analyysissa on yhteensä 206, joista 95 Hankyoreh:sta ja 111 JoongAngista. Kumpikin kirjoitti Choista yhtä negatiivisesti johtuen hänen vähäisestä vallastaan ja yleisestä epäsuosiostaan Koreassa. Hankyoreh kirjoitti Parkista myös erittäin negatiivisesti, kun taas JoongAng käytti joko negatiivista kehystä tai sekoitti negatiivisia ja positiivisia kehyksiä artikkeleissaan. Yllättävää kyllä, se ei kertaakaan suoraan puolustanut konservatiivista presidenttiä, kenties johtuen hänen hyvin vähäisestä kannatuksestaan. Sen uutisointi Parkiin liittyen oli kuitenkin vähemmän negatiivista kuin Hankyoreh:n, joka vaati hänen syrjäyttämistään skandaalin alusta lähtien.</p> <p>Hankyoreh asettui myös melko avoimesti Leeta vastaan ja odotetusti JoongAng puolusti häntä ja Samsungia hänen pidätykseensä saakka. Hankyoreh:n avoin negatiivisuus Leeta kohtaan ja myös JoongAngin varovainen kritiikki hänen pidätyksensä jälkeen voidaan nähdä merkkinä siitä, että korealainen media on entistä valmiimpi kritisoimaan paitsi poliittisia päättäjiä, niin myös taloudellisia johtajia. Kuitenkin Leesta kirjoitetut artikkelit olivat kauttaaltaan vähemmän negatiivisia kuin Parkista tai Choista kirjoitetut artikkelit kummassakin lehdessä.</p>			
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Introduction

I was an exchange student in Seoul National University from August of 2016 to June of 2017. During that time, something quite peculiar happened, something that I discussed with my professors, my student peers, and my friends alike. Coming from a very calm political culture where mass protests are a rare event and large scale political scandals are even more so, comprehending the magnitude and full meaning of the Choi Soon-sil gate was quite difficult, even if I watched it unfold from a very close distance. But it intrigued me, so much so that I abandoned my original idea for my graduate thesis of continuing with the topic I chose for my undergrad thesis, poverty in South Korea, and decided to write about the scandal instead.

It took me months of thinking and brain storming to finally arrive to my final choice of research topic. Despite my self-doubt in my Korean capabilities and my general ability to tackle a totally new field of research, I decided to stick with it. Now, six months later, I know I made the right decision.

While the general topic of this thesis is the political scandal of 2016-2017 surrounding then president Park Geun-hye, the actual research made is on the newspaper media and how it covered the main three people tangled in the scandal, namely president Park, her friend Choi Soon-sil, and vice-chairman of Samsung Group, Jay Y. Lee. More specifically, this is a media analysis of frames used when reporting on these three people by two different Korean newspapers, *Hankyoreh* and *JoongAng Ilbo*.

With that being said, however, even writing the chapter on the timeline of the scandal required research of its own because there is no academic material available yet on this matter. Thus, it was up to me to use news sources to figure out what happened and when, so I could write a detailed description of how the events unfolded. The fact that not much has been published yet on this very recent chain of events not only made writing about it that much more difficult, but it has also given me great responsibility to do my work well. I hope I have done this topic justice.

First, I will talk in length about the political scandal itself to establish a clear timeline for what happened between October of 2016 and April of 2017. Events that took place after that will not be included because this is the timeline of the article sample used for the analysis, but also because the final word is yet to be said on the case. At the time of writing this, Park still hasn't

been convicted, leaving the whole chain of events without a conclusion. Perhaps a full, detailed account can be written once everyone involved has been finally sentenced.

In the second chapter, I will explain the history of press freedom in South Korea and how that relates to this particular case. As will be shown later, writing about people in power, be it political or economic, has not always been something newspapers have been allowed to do in Korea. Although all direct control of the press has been erased, self-censorship in the press is still an issue, which gives an interesting premise for this research topic as well. Special attention will be paid to how Samsung Group has controlled or directed the press in the past, and also in present day.

Third chapter is dedicated to explaining the theoretical and methodological background of the analysis made. I will also explain how the data sample was collected and how it was coded. This is done to give credibility for the analysis made in the next chapter, which will include both quantitative and qualitative aspects to ensure a broad scope of analysis. Lastly, conclusions will be drawn from the analysis chapter and each research question will be answered explicitly and concretely.

1 The political scandal and the people behind it

In this chapter, I will explore the main reasons behind the 2016 political scandal concerning the now former president Park Geun-hye, and how these events unfolded. This is important to ensure a good understanding of what exactly happened in this peculiar chain of events, and to establish the timeline for the research and media analysis that will be the core of this thesis. I will also describe briefly the personal life of the woman at the root of this scandal, Choi Soon-sil, to come to a better understanding of her relationship with president Park and her involvement in the scandal at large. News articles and videos will be used as the main sources for this chapter, as there isn't yet much academic material available. This is simply because of how recent this whole political scandal is.

1.1 Who is Choi Soon-sil?

Choi Soon-sil was born in 1956. Her father was Choi Tae-min, founder and leader of a religious cult in South Korea called the Church of Eternal Life. It was through her father's connections with the Park family that she befriended Park Geun-hye in the 1970s. Choi Tae-min was a close friend of Park Geun-hye's father, president Park Chung-hee, and this friendship lasted until Park Chung-hee was assassinated in 1979. Kim Jae-gyu, the man who assassinated Park Chung-hee and at the time acted as the head of the KCIA, claimed that one reason to murder the authoritarian president was because Park could not get rid of Choi Tae-min's influence in his political decision making. (Choe 2016, Sala and Steger 2016.) It is possible to assert from this, that Choi Tae-min's power over the president at the time was not considered beneficial or even positive by the people close to president Park. How many people besides Kim Jae-gyu believed this, is impossible to tell, but it is probable Kim was not alone with his opinion.

Choi Tae-min also had a lot of influence over Park Geun-hye as her mentor, most likely following the assassination of her mother in 1974. Reportedly, Choi Tae-min claimed to be able to pass on messages from president Park's late mother and to communicate with her even in the afterlife. (Choe 2016.) While this may sound bizarre to most, it is fair to keep in mind that to a grieving, young daughter this could have been of great comfort, especially right after the violent death of her mother. His role in her life most probably only strengthened after she also lost her father in 1979.

It is well-known to the Korean public that Choi Tae-min stayed close with Park Geun-hye until his passing in 1994. Their close bond resulted in numerous rumors concerning the nature of their relationship, mostly due to their large age gap of over 40 years. The wildest rumors even suggest Park Geun-hye had a child with Choi Tae-min, but no evidence support this. President Park has denied any allegations regarding the issue, stating that Choi Tae-min was simply a close mentor to her in her younger years. (Choe 2016, Sala and Steger 2016.)

Choi Soon-sil grew close to Park Geun-hye in the 1970s, which is made evident with pictures of them together at different events around that time. It is now speculated that after the death of her father, she continued to play the role in president Park's life that her father had previously played. (Choe, 2016.) The women are only four years apart in age, which could also in part explain their close bond. The close connection between the two women has been widely known in South Korea even years prior to the scandal of 2016, as rumors around Choi Soon-sil and her frequent visits to the Blue House, the president's residence in South Korea, began to circulate as early as 2014 (Kim, O. 2014).

Choi Soon-sil has never been a politician, however. In her personal endeavors, she has been a business and land owner since the 1980s. She was also previously married to Chung Yoon-hoi, who worked as a chief of staff and a close aide to president Park in the early 2000s. Choi and Chung got divorced in 2014. (Kim, O. 2014.) Choi and Chung have a daughter called Chung Yoo-ra, who has also been more or less involved with the scandal of 2016. Her possible involvement in the controversy will be discussed in more detail in the following sections.

What is worth pointing out here is that Choi Soon-sil has never acted as a politician or a government official, and has only played a supportive role in Park Geun-hye's political campaigns and career. Her involvement in politics, then, is understandably a cause for concern, given that she is a civilian with no status to be meddling with government politics. The second point is her close connection to her father Choi Tae-min, and the questionable influence he reportedly held over both Park Chung-hee and Park Geun-hye. Had she come to Park Geun-hye's life under less suspicious circumstances, her actions might not have been brought to question in the way that they were. Because she appears to be following the questionable legacy of her father, it seems justified the press was suspicious of her frequent visits to the Blue House.

1.2 The Choi Soon-sil Gate

Choi Soon-sil was in fact already under growing suspicion, and even investigation, before the bigger political scandal began in late October of 2016. Choi's close connections with two allegedly non-profit foundations, called the Mir Foundation and the K-Sports Foundation, had been called to question shortly after they had been founded in late 2015 and early 2016, respectively. There were claims being made that she might have established the foundations, together with some presidential aides in the Park administration, solely for the purpose of personal gain. Officially, the foundations' goals were to promote Korean culture and sports, and to help train professional athletes, but these claims were brought to question in the fall of 2016. (Kim, B. 2016.)

The Mir Foundation was founded in October of 2015, and the K-Sports Foundation in January of 2016. The chairman of the Mir Foundation was Yonsei University professor Kim Hyung-su, who is said to have assumed the position mostly because of his ties with Cha Eun-taek. Cha was a key policy maker in the Park administration especially in the field of culture, and perhaps most importantly, a friend of Choi Soon-sil. (Kim, B. 2016.) Cha also earned himself the nickname 'crown prince' due to his rapid success in the Park administration (Kang and Hyun, 2016). Kim Hyung-su gave up his position in the foundation already in September of 2016, as the investigation into the foundation and its purpose began. Several others were also involved in these foundations, both from within the Park administration, as well as outside of it. (Kim, B. 2016.)

The allegations stated that these foundations had been used to gather funds forcibly from the big Korean conglomerates and their lobbying organizations, the sum estimated to be somewhere close to 80 billion won, which is a little under 60 million euros. Furthermore, it was said that the funds the foundations collected were then channeled into two shell companies owned by Choi Soon-sil and her daughter Chung Yoo-ra. These companies were called Widec Sports and Blue K, and they were both established in Germany. These companies are said to have used these funds to cover training expenses for Chung, a dressage athlete, and to buy properties in Germany. Cha Eun-taek was registered as the head of Blue K, which further demonstrated his close ties with Choi Soon-sil. (Kim, B. 2016, Kang and Hyun, 2016.)

The heads of the Mir Foundation and the K-Sports Foundation, as well as others involved in founding them, claimed the conglomerates had funded the foundations only through voluntary

donations, and had not been forcibly coerced into doing so. President Park also denied any involvement with these foundations and their alleged wrongdoings. Despite these claims of innocence, the prosecutors continued their investigation into the foundations' operations. At this point, Choi Soon-sil and her daughter had left South Korea, as well as Cha Eun-taek and others involved, most likely to avoid prosecution. (Kim, B. 2016.)

The investigation into Choi Soon-sil's activities soon broadened beyond just the scope of these two foundations. This eventually led to the complete revelation of her close involvement with president Park and her administration. As stated previously, it was already well-known that she acted as a close confidant to the president, but the true nature of their relationship was only brought to light in this scandal.

The official starting point for the political scandal that would result in president Park's impeachment was October 24th, 2016, when JTBC Newsroom, an independent news channel, revealed in its newscast that Choi Soon-sil had reportedly received 44 presidential speeches from the Blue House before president Park herself, and up to 200 confidential government documents, the speeches included. According to the JTBC Newsroom newscast, their investigation team discovered this information by acquiring a tablet computer that Choi Soon-sil had used and then abandoned close to her office, apparently to be disposed of. The tablet computer data showed that Choi Soon-sil had received presidential speeches up to three days before the president herself, and had even made changes and edits to said speeches. (Kim, T. et al 2016, Son 2016.)

This was considered condemning mostly because Choi Soon-sil did not hold any government post and didn't have security clearance, which meant that she wasn't in a position to be reviewing or approving presidential speeches, let alone other confidential government files. These speeches found on the tablet computer included some of the most important speeches president Park had given during her administration, casting doubt over who was making the important policy decisions- elected president Park, or Choi Soon-sil? This also was a violation on security laws on president Park's behalf (Son 2016).

Evidence for how much influence Choi held over president Park and her whole administration built up quickly after the JTBC broadcast. The evidence suggested that Choi had access to president Park's schedules, personnel arrangements, travel itineraries, and classified information like secret military meetings. Not only this, but it was also later revealed that Choi controlled also president Park's wardrobe, and one news channel even broadcast a video

of Choi giving orders to president Park's aides. (Choe 2016, Kim, H. 2016.) All these appeared quite troubling for the Korean public, who began to call Choi 'shadow president' or 'shadow leader', further questioning if president Park really held any power over her own administration and policies.

What is of importance here is to connect the corruption allegations made against the Mir Foundation and the K-Sports Foundation and Choi's involvement in them that preceded the discoveries made on her tablet computer. Choi's name had already been tarnished with possible corruption and bribery in a very high-profile case that involved well-known figures in the Park administration. For it to be made clear that she also had quite a lot of power over the Blue House and president Park did not reflect well on president Park. The Korean public did not react well to this news, as these revelations cast doubt over how democratic and lawful the rule of the Park administration was.

What also added to the anger and disappointment Koreans felt regarding the whole issue, was the scandal involving Chung Yoo-ra. It had also been revealed during the fall of 2016 that she had received preferential treatment from Ehwa Women's University, where she was enrolled at the time. Both her enrollment in the university and her academic performance were brought to question under the suspicions that she had received unfair advantages. The basis for her acceptance and enrollment were disputed, and it was also revealed she had received good grades in her classes despite failure to attend and to submit assignments on time. It was also revealed that Choi Soon-sil had visited the school on several occasions. (Chung, 2016.) This scandal began around the same time as the one concerning the Mir Foundation and the K-Sports Foundation did.

Enrollment into university is very crucial to most young Koreans after they graduate from high school. Ehwa Women's University is one of the top universities, and to be accepted into Ehwa, or any other renowned university in Korea, takes a lot of hard work from the students. Many are often left disappointed, or try year after year to be admitted into their desired university. Top high schools, private academies, etc. are a huge business in South Korea, and it is often a great effort and sacrifice on the whole family's part to give their teenage child the best education possible to enable them to be accepted into one of these top-level universities. This is why the news of someone getting in unfairly, and furthermore passing their classes without putting in the work required, angered Korean university students as well as the public at large. (see Lee, C. 2005, Lee, J. 2006, Kim. S and Lee, J. 2010, Seth 2002.)

The professors' association of Ehwa Women's University formed an investigative committee to look into alleged preferential treatment of Chung Yoo-ra, and demanded the truth on the matter be disclosed. The students at Ehwa Women's University, as well as some of the professors, staged protest rallies on campus because of this issue. These allegations lead to the resignation of Choi Kyung-hee, the president of the university, only days before the true beginning of the political scandal involving Choi Soon-sil and president Park. (Chung 2016, Choe 2016, Son 2016.)

1.3 Calls for impeachment begin

President Park was quick to make a public apology after the JTBC Newsroom broadcast. The Blue House had tried to deny all such accusations at first, but it was soon left with no other choice but to admit to them, as more evidence on the issue continued to surface. President Park made her apology on Oct. 25th, 2016, and her public appearance lasted less than 12 minutes. In her announcement, she acknowledged her ties to Choi Soon-sil, and admitted to having sought her council during her presidency and allowing her to edit her speeches. President Park said that Choi had only offered 'personal thoughts and opinions' as well as help with 'phrasing and other things' on the presidential speeches, nothing more. (Choe 2016, Kim, H. 2016.) She also claimed that Choi only assisted her during her campaign and at the very beginning of her term, before she had a system of advisors and staff in place (Evans 2016).

In her public address, president Park described Choi as a close friend who had stood by her through difficult times, such as the violent deaths of her mother and father in the 1970s. She apologized to the Korean people for her actions. (Choe 2016, Kim, H. 2016.) However, her public appearance did very little to calm down the press or the public, and cleared up almost close to nothing. Everything she admitted to in her speech was already common knowledge by then.

On the following day, the prosecutors searched Choi's apartment, the offices of the Mir Foundation and the K-Sports Foundation, as well as the homes of her closest associates. On that same day, an extensive interview with former employee at the Mir Foundation, Lee Sung-han, was published on *Hankyoreh*. Lee put forth further evidence of Choi's influence in president Park's administration. He said that Choi had her own team of advisors who influenced government decisions from cabinet appointments to policies towards North Korea, and they would hold meetings on daily basis to negotiate such issues. Lee also said that Choi

received regular reports directly from the Blue House, basically acquiring all the same documents as the president, and that all decisions made in the Park administration had to be approved by her. He said that they would devise project plans at these meetings with Choi, that would then later become official Blue House documents without any changes made to them. Lee also told *Hankyoreh* that Cha Eun-taek attended these meetings very regularly. (Choe 2016, Kim and Ryu 2016.)

On October 28th, president Park continued to take measures to get the situation under her control. She dismissed all of her top advisors in her staff, and promised to reshuffle her personnel. Again, this did very little to reassure anyone, and political analysts in the country and even overseas predicted a total collapse of her leadership and political credibility. (Fifield and Seo 2016.) Her plummeting approval ratings suggested as much, as polls over the following weeks showed her public support declining rapidly. On the first week following the outbreak of the scandal, her approval ratings went down from around 30 percent overall to around 10 percent. On the weeks after that, the Gallup data showed a continued downward trend, as the ratings went down as low as 1-3 percent in people aged 60 years or younger. Her approval rating was slightly better in those over 60 years of age, but was also barely over 10 percent. This is the lowest approval rating any South Korean president has ever received since the beginning of these polls. (Denney 2016, Sohn 2016, Son 2016.) With approval ratings as low as these, it was becoming more obvious that it would be very difficult for her to regain the public's confidence and trust.

Public protests demanding president Park to step down began instantly. The first rally was held on the following Saturday after the JTBC broadcast on October 29th, with estimates ranging from 10,000 to 20,000 people protesting in Seoul alone. Other protests were held in other parts of the country as well. (Denney 2016, Hu 2016.) These protests would become a weekly occurrence, taking place every Saturday in Gwanghwamun Square in central Seoul, demanding for the impeachment of president Park until it finally happened.

1.4 Arrest of Choi and impeachment of president Park

Choi Soon-sil returned to South Korea on October 30th from Germany. Before her return, she gave only one interview to *Segye Ilbo*, where she admitted to having received drafts of president Park's speeches but denied all other accusations made against her. (McCurry 2016.) What is worth noting, though, is that *Segye Ilbo* is owned by the Unification Church, another formidable religious movement in South Korea. The Unification Church, like Choi Tae-min's

Church of Eternal Life, is tied to several controversies, but it holds far more power in South Korea than Choi Tae-min's sect ever did. It is telling, however, that Choi chose to only speak to *Segye Ilbo* and not any of the biggest news outlets in the country. Upon her arrival to South Korea, her attorney promised she would comply with the prosecutors' requests, and would testify honestly and according to the facts. Her attorney also conveyed her apology to the public for causing distress and disturbances. (McCurry 2016.)

Choi was detained under emergency detention the following day, on October 31st, and was brought to the supreme prosecutor's office in Seoul on November 1st. Prosecutors made a court request for an arrest warrant on November 2nd to keep her under custody in the fear that she might try to destroy any further evidence, and she was officially arrested later that day. (Reuters in Seoul 2016, Williams 2017.) President Park apologized to the public again on November 3rd, and agreed to an investigation into her actions by prosecutors, despite her immunity from actual prosecution as ruling president (Associated Press 2016). On November 6th, two of president Park's former aides were also arrested for colluding with Choi (Associated Press 2016).

Finally, Choi as well as the two former aides were indicted on a number of charges on November 20th. At the same time, the prosecutors said that president Park "played a collusive role in a considerable portion of the criminal activities". The prosecutors acknowledged that they couldn't officially prosecute the president while still in office, but promised to continue the probe into her actions. (Williams 2016, Agence France-Presse 2016.)

At the same time, weekly demonstrations continued to be held in Seoul, demanding for president Park's impeachment. The demonstrations continued to grow in number of participants, although the estimates vary depending on the sources used. President Park offered to step down on November 29th, asking the parliament to arrange for her term to be cut short so she could resign. Officially, her term was not to end until February 2018. The opposition refused to do this, however, saying that she was only trying to avoid the humiliation of impeachment and to prolong the process of settling the political scandal. (Park and Kim 2016, McCurry 2016.)

On December 3rd, three opposition parties introduced an impeachment motion, signed by 171 members out of the 300-seat legislature (Jun 2016). The motion was put to a vote on December 9th, and with 234 votes out of 300 and with the required 2/3 majority thus achieved, president Park was impeached by the parliament. Many political analysts attributed this to the

persistent demonstrations held by the people for consecutive weeks, proving to even president Park's ruling party Saneuridang that if the motion didn't pass, it wouldn't reflect well on the party and its future. (McCurry 2016, Kishore 2016.)

After the impeachment of president Park by the parliament, the legitimacy of the impeachment had to be assessed by the Constitutional Court of South Korea. The nine judges of the Constitutional Court held hearings and meetings starting from January of 2017, and gave their verdict on March 10th, 2017. Their unanimous decision was to uphold the parliament's vote, effectively making the impeachment official and permanent. (Evans 2017, McCurry 2017.) By removing her from office, the impeachment made Park lose her immunity from prosecution, which would shortly lead to her arrest.

1.5 Samsung joins the scandal and Park's arrest

What happened during the Constitutional Court's decision-making process is also important, both to the political scandal at large as well as for this thesis. Leaders of big conglomerates were brought in to be probed by the parliament in December of 2016, Samsung Group vice-chairman Jay Y. Lee, or JY Lee, included. Their donations to the Mir Foundation and the K-Sports Foundation were scrutinized to determine their role in it, in other words, if they had truly been forced to donate funds, or if they collaborated willingly. In that hearing, Lee denied having made those donations with the hopes of receiving any favors for his company. Samsung Group made the biggest donations to the two foundations out of all conglomerates involved, the sum totaling over 20 billion won, or 15 million euros. At this point, none of the conglomerates were accused of any wrongdoing. (Reuters 2016.)

The situation changed in January of 2017, as Lee was summoned by the prosecutors to be investigated as a suspect in the bribery case. The spokesman for the special prosecution team said on January 11th that they were looking into whether or not Lee bribed Choi to gain government favors. Such favors included government approval of the controversial Samsung merger in 2015 that was heavily opposed by minority shareholders, while Lee and his family were the biggest beneficiaries. The merger ensured Lee's position at the top of the company, so the prosecutors felt that it was a strategic move on his part, rather than a rational choice made for the good of the Samsung Group. Two Samsung executives were also questioned on the case. (Associated Press 2017.)

Already on January 16th, the prosecutors sought an arrest warrant on Lee on charges of bribery, embezzlement, and perjury. They said that Lee had in fact paid up to 43 billion won, or 35 million euros, in bribes to Choi, her companies, the Mir Foundation, and the K-sports Foundation. In return for the money, Park and the Blue House pressured the National Pension Service to support the merger of the Samsung affiliates, as it held a deciding vote on the decision due to its shares in the Samsung Group. The merger created losses for the NPS, which is why it was considered odd for it to agree to it. The prosecutors said that while they understood the economic implications of possibly arresting Lee, they felt that serving justice was far more important. (Kim, B. 2017, McCurry 2017.)

Arresting the Samsung Group leader was not quite so easy. The Seoul central district court refused the arrest warrant, claiming that they didn't see justification for arresting Lee. Lee was released from detention on January 19th after the court's decision. Immediately, people called this decision to question, accusing the court of making a biased decision simply because of the influence the Samsung Group holds in South Korea. (McCurry 2017.)

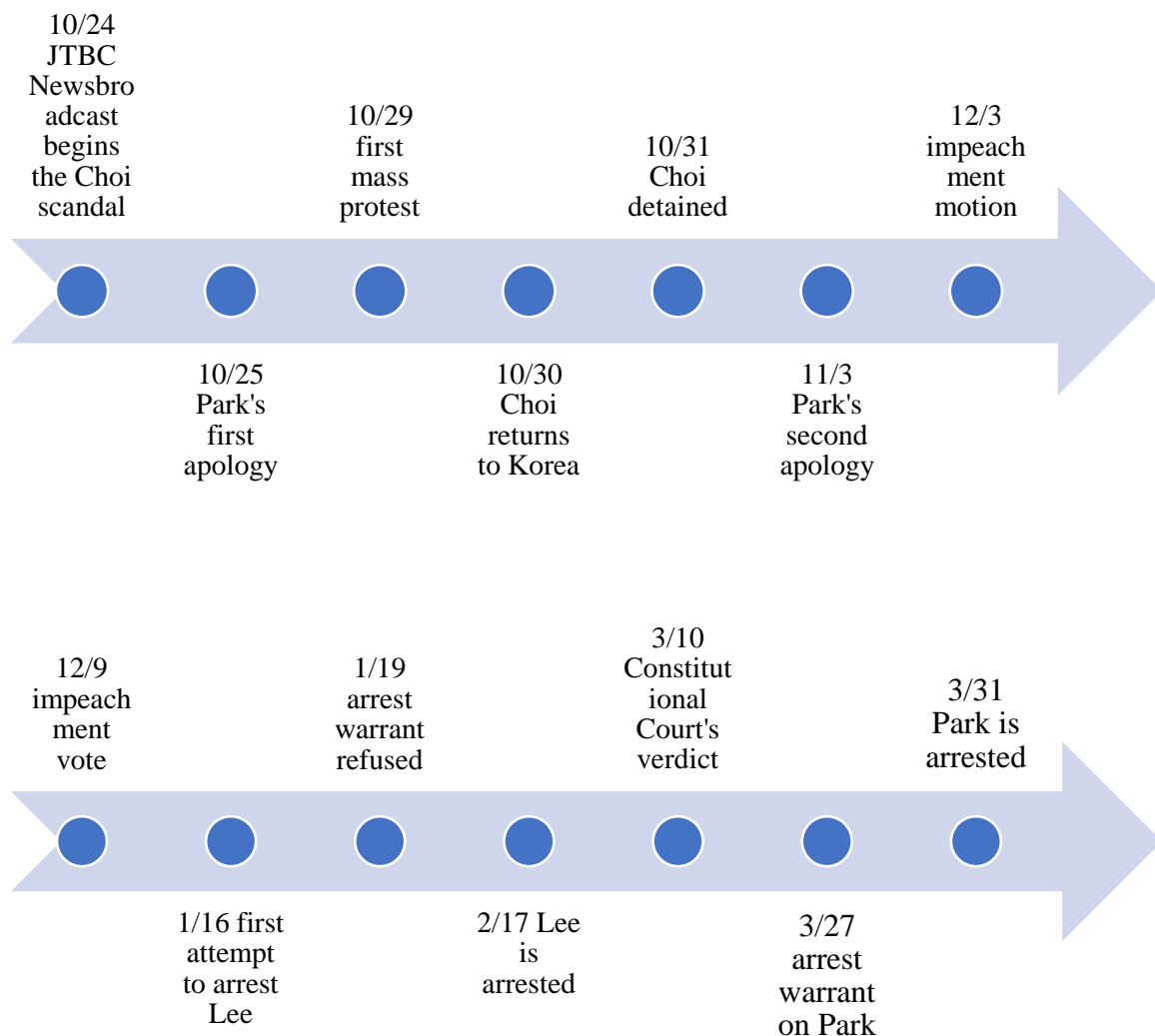
It took almost another month before Lee was finally arrested. The prosecutors rebuilt their case against him and brought it to the court once more with further evidence of Lee's criminal actions to back it up. Lee was successfully arrested on February 17th, with the court spokesman saying that the court thought it necessary to arrest him in the light of new evidence and the newly added criminal charges. The prosecutors alleged that Lee had given bribes not only related to the 2015 merger, but also related to his succession to power within Samsung Group. They also said they found evidence of hiding profits from criminal activities and hiding assets overseas. The decision to arrest Lee was made on the same grounds as with Choi, as the court feared Lee might try to destroy evidence or flee the country to avoid prosecution. (McCurry 2017, Kang and Lee 2017.) This was commonly seen as a step to the right direction and away from the past, where big conglomerates like Samsung have been able to avoid the law thanks to their close-knit ties with the government.

Lee was then officially indicted on February 28th. Together with him, four other Samsung executives were also charged on bribery, embezzlement, and hiding assets overseas. Lee was the only one to be charged with perjury in front of the parliament for his allegedly false testimony in the parliament hearing in December. (McCurry 2017, Kim, H. 2017.)

It took another month for impeached president Park to also be arrested and then indicted. The prosecutors announced their plan to apply for an arrest warrant on March 27th, and she was

arrested early in the morning of March 31st. Park was formally indicted on multiple charges like bribery, abuse of power, coercion, extortion, and leaking classified government information on April 4th. (Park 2017, Associated Press 2017, Guardian staff and agencies 2017.)

1.6 Timeline for the scandal



2 Media in South Korea: a struggle for freedom

In this chapter, I will explain the historical context of press freedom in South Korea in brief, and also explain why this research topic is of such importance. As the people involved in this scandal represent both politicians and business owners of the big conglomerates, press freedom on both sides will be explored in adequate detail. Choi could be classified as a

business owner as well, but her wealth or power come nowhere near that of Lee's in this regard. Thus, it's more appropriate to regard her as so called regular citizen in that she did not hold a government post, was not an elected politician, and is not the head of a big conglomerate or any major corporation.

2.1 Press freedom in the past

It is unnecessary for the scope of this thesis to explore the full development of press freedom in the history of South Korea, but a brief summary is in order. Under the first republic, the Rhee Seung-man administration, the press enjoyed relative freedom from state control, at least in comparison to what was to come. The Rhee administration did outlaw leftist newspapers and even forced some to shut down, but at the same time the press was still able to criticize some of the wrong-doings of the government. It could even show support to the student demonstrations in April 1960 that eventually led to president Rhee being forced to resign. (Kwak 2012, 7-8, Sung and Hyok 2009, 176.)

This changed with the Park Chung-hee administration in 1962. Censorship was imposed on all media, and the majority of the newspapers came under the direct control of the military regime. Only some newspapers, such as *Dong-A*, *Kyunghyang*, *Chosun*, and *Maeil*, could hold up some forms of resistance, but these had to also succumb to the government in the years to come. They were brought under government control by different means, such as forcing them to be sold to pro-government companies, arresting journalists, forced firings of journalists, intimidating the advertisers, and bribing the newspapers with huge loans and other favors. All newspapers were effectively silenced by 1968. Under the Yushin constitution, the suppression was also applied to foreign correspondents. Foreign media and their representatives faced different forms of harassment, ranging from censorship to closing down news bureaus and deporting correspondents. (Kwak 2012, 8-12, Sung and Hyok 2009, 176, Kang, M. 2005, 78.)

The Chun Doo-hwan government was no better. After coming to power in 1980, the Chun administration enforced reporting guidelines on all forms of media under the Basic Press Law. These outlines included prohibiting media from criticizing the government or the martial law, along with many other limitations on reporting and broadcasting. The government also prepared a blacklist of journalists who should be dismissed from media outlets, although the number of journalists fired from their jobs far exceeded the number of journalists listed. Several magazines were forced to shut down, and foreign media was still closely monitored. (Kwak 2012, 15-21, Kang, M. 2005, 79.)

Independent news agencies and broadcasting agencies were absorbed into state-run agencies, and several provincial newspapers were forced to shut down, giving the government full control of all forms of media (Sung and Hyok 2009, 177). This, together with the willing collusion between the media owners, journalists, and the Chun regime, effectively created a press cartel fully under the Chun administration's control (Kim, C. 2016, 16).

From 1987 onwards, together with the emergence of democratic government with the Roh Tae-woo administration, the press freedom also improved drastically. New dailies and periodicals grew dramatically in number, and the press moved away from direct state control to market control. (Kwak 2012, 30-38.) The new constitution guaranteed press freedom, at least in theory (Sung and Hyok 2009, 177). The Basic Press Law was officially abolished and replaced by the Act on Registration of Periodical Publication that loosened regulations on printing businesses and focused on the healthy development of the press (Kim, C. 2016, 17).

But, despite their new-found freedom, the major newspapers with the biggest circulation, all conservative in their political stance, emerged as powerful media conglomerates that rather than standing up to the government continued to collude with it instead. In other words, despite their freedom to criticize the government and expose its wrong-doings, the major papers opted not to do so. (Kwak 2012, 30-38, Kang, M. 2005, 82.) But the rapid emergence of more newspapers, more varied in their political alignments, brought a newfound pluralism to the now market controlled field of press media (Kim, C. 2016, 17). Even if the established newspapers still weren't keen on changing their course, the increased competition was still bringing the winds of change to the Korean news media.

1993 and the Kim Young-Sam administration brought about stronger pluralism in news reporting, both in the topics they wrote about and the news sources used. But while government criticism was finally allowed, the government still tried to control the media mostly through president Kim's personal ties with the owners of newspapers and the journalists. Private networks, collusion, nepotism, etc. were used to appease the reporters to maintain a favorable relationship between the government and the press. (Kwak 2012, 38-48, Kang, M. 2005, 81.) At the same time, as advertisement revenue began to constitute a bigger part of the newspapers' revenue, the advertisement agencies and the chaebols behind those agencies gained more influence. Newspapers that were more dependent on their advertisers would obviously be less likely to go against their best interest, in this case the chaebols. (Kim, C. 2016, 17-18.)

The only politicians the press felt comfortable to expose for their mistakes or even crimes were the political actors who no longer held any power. When president Kim became involved in scandals, first for accepting dirty money from Rho Tae-woo in 1992 which was exposed in 1996, and then for his son's involvement in bribery, corruption, etc., most of the conservative media remained silent. It was only on his last year in office and after the public opinion turned against him, that the press finally turned on him as well. (Kwak 2012, 38-48.)

The emergence of reformist government under Kim Dae-jung administration improved press freedom. The biggest newspapers, all conservative, felt they could criticize the progressive government more openly, and there was growing tension between the state and the media. But there were some inherent issues with the newspaper industry that might have affected press freedom adversely. In the 2000s, the industry was dominated by three dailies, *Chosun*, *Dong-A*, and *JoongAng*, which were responsible for almost 70 percent of all newspaper circulation. There was also a lack of transparent and fair competition. (Kwak 2012, 53-56, Kang, M. 2005, 85.) This will be explored in further detail in the next chapter.

For the Rho Mu-hyun administration, the relationship between the government and the conservative newspapers continued as confrontational and antagonistic. President Rho was quite clear in his favoritism, giving interviews only to the reformist newspapers. When it came to the conservative newspapers, he used the rule of law as a control measure, more specifically lawsuits filed against newspapers and media reports. (Kwak 2012, 57-68.) Journalists felt, however, that the media could criticize political powers without having to fear any unlawful consequences. Yet at the same time, the market powers still held sway over most publications. (Gong and Rawnsley 2017.)

Online media emerged and grew rapidly, quickly challenging the traditional media. Most of the online newspapers launched in the 2000s were reformist and liberal, adding to the polarization in the media. The ideological orientation of the media has been proven to affect the ways in which news are handled and how they are framed. (Kwak 2012, 57-68.) This issue will also be examined in more detail in the following section.

In conclusion, it can be said that the official democratization of South Korea in 1987-1988 did not bring about complete press freedom or fully matured, democratic media overnight. The process of achieving media capable of criticizing the government and presidents still in power was slow, and only somewhat materialized in the 2000s. It can be said that the news

media in South Korea is no longer controlled by the government, although the newspaper's political and ideological stance plays a role in how it reports on any one issue.

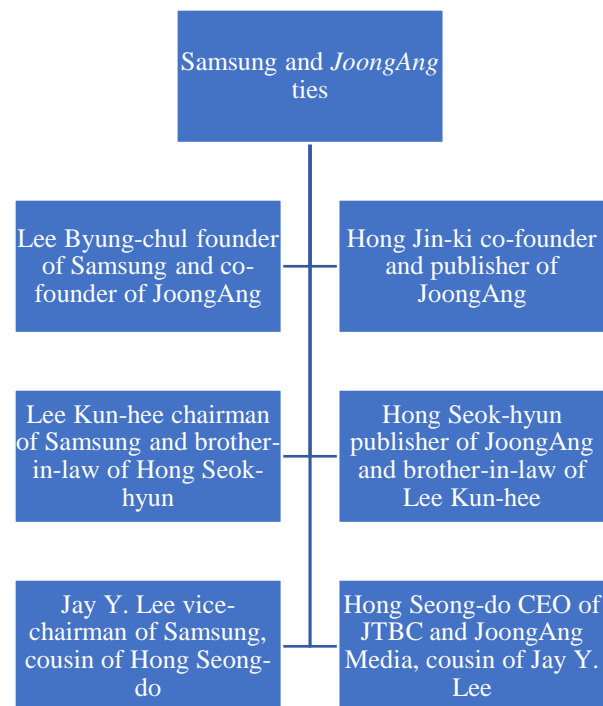
2.2 Newspapers and scandals

Since South Korea's newspapers have now reached complete freedom from government control, or at least there are no longer laws or official censorship in place that would prohibit them from reporting whatever they wish, have they now reached a level of maturity and accountability that is usually seen as a requirement for a democratic state and its press? Democracy requires accountability, which makes it necessary to have a 'free press willing and able to expose corruption' (Kwak 2012, 70 > Diamond 1996, 117). In a mature democracy, the news media should be 'a mechanism for promoting accountability of those in positions of power by publishing information that other parties would want to keep secret' (Kwak 2012, 70). In other words, journalism should expose corruption and other wrong-doings by those in positions of power, be it political or economic. The question then is, have South Korean newspapers been able to do that? For the purpose of this thesis, looking at reporting on political and economic scandals is of most significant importance, given the people involved in the Choi Soon-sil gate.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the three biggest dailies hold almost 70 percent of the market share. Given that they all share a conservative ideological stance, they also have a lot of influence on the South Korean society. It is also worth noting here that *JoongAng*, one of the big three papers, was owned by the Samsung Group until 2000, when it was sold to its affiliates. But *JoongAng* has maintained close ties with the Samsung Group through family relationships. *JoongAng* was founded in 1965 by Lee Byung-chul, the founder and the late chairman of Samsung, and Hong Jin-ki, former Minister for Internal Affairs. Hong's son, Hong Seok-hyun, acted as the publisher of *JoongAng* until 2015, and he's the brother-in-law of the former chairman of Samsung Group, Lee Kun-hee. Lee Kun-hee is the son of Lee Byung-chul and the father of Jay Y. Lee. The Lee family also has close ties to *Dong-A* through marriage. (Kwak 2012, 72-73; Korea JoongAng Daily 2015, Huffington Post 2014.)

The current publisher of *JoongAng* is Hong Seok-hyun's son, Hong Jeong-do. What is fascinating about Hong Jeong-do is that he is the CEO and president of JTBC, although it is probably fair to assume that the JTBC Newsroom was not aware the Choi Soon-sil gate would also later tarnish the reputation of Jay Y. Lee. JoongAng Media Network is the largest shareholder of JTBC with 25% of the total shares, and Hong is also the CEO of JoongAng

Media Network. (Korea JoongAng Daily 2015, Choi, H. 2011.) These connections between *JoongAng* and the Samsung Group are good to keep in mind in the analytical part of this thesis, as it is more than likely that the close ties could affect the way *JoongAng* frames Jay Y. Lee.



In general, the conservative papers are mostly family run businesses, like most chaebols in Korea, while the progressive papers tend to have a wider base of ownership. *Hankyoreh* is entirely owned by its employees, in *Kyunghyang* the employees all together are the majority shareholder, and *Munhwa* and *Seoul Daily* have employee-ownership of about 40% of the total shares. (Kwak 2012, 72-73.) This is of importance because with a newspaper owned or run by only one family, it runs the risk of advocating for the interests and ideologies of that family. Then again, it can be argued that *Hankyoreh* or *Kyunghyang* have not been neutral in their journalism, and they have not been very balanced in their content either, despite their more varied ownership. They also have ties to certain political groups, possibly jeopardizing their ability to be politically neutral or unbiased. (Kwak 2012, 73-74.)

As was discussed in the previous section, South Korean newspapers have slowly regained their independence from the government and starting from the early 2000s, have been able to criticize the government and even the administrations in power at the time. The emergence of politically diverse newspapers has meant that there is always going to be a newspaper who feels ready to criticize whoever is in power; conservative newspapers have no hesitations to write about progressive politicians, and vice versa. Thus, it can be said that the newspapers

‘have become very vigilant of any wrongdoing of the president, politicians or government officials’ (Kwak 2012, 80). The Park administration did make an effort to curb criticism of its policies through invoking the National Security Law and a criminal ban on defamation, which was seen as a threat to press freedom at large (Freedom House 2016). But in the end, these measures could not silence the media in the Choi Soon-sil gate.

South Korean newspapers are fulfilling their watchdog role in society when it comes to politics, but can the same be said with economic corruption, especially when it involves the big conglomerates? The answer to this is unfortunately no. A general pattern can be observed in the way the major newspapers, especially those with close ties to these conglomerates, report on any scandals or wrongdoings by them. First, when the scandal surfaces, the major newspapers try to avoid the subject by either ignoring it or reporting only the basic facts. Once the issue becomes big enough for prosecutors to take action, these newspapers will feel forced to finally report on it, but usually side with the conglomerate by trying to justify its actions. After the prosecution finds concrete evidence of crime and a verdict is given, the newspapers will typically continue to defend the chaebols, especially by arguing that punishing them will jeopardize the economic situation of South Korea. (Kwak 2012: 81-83, Kwak 2012 > Je and Lee, 2007.)

The major newspapers are thus exercising some levels of self-censorship by either ignoring the scandals as they emerge, or by framing the articles in such a manner that is favorable for the conglomerate in question. But aside from self-censorship, there is also concrete evidence of these companies purposefully trying to silence or at least punish newspapers that are critical of them. Since the scandal that is the focus of this thesis also involves the Samsung Group, it is interesting to look at how the Samsung Group has dealt with newspapers in the past in times of crisis. This is not to say that other big chaebols haven’t acted the same, or achieved similar results with other means, but the behavior of the Samsung Group is just the most relevant for the topic of this research.

The Samsung Group was previously in a scandal from 2007 to 2009 with its previous chairman Lee Kun-hee for transferring funds to his son illegally, tax evasion, breaches of trust, and illegal bond dealings. Lee Kun-hee was later pardoned from his sentence by president Lee Myung-bak, which was a very controversial decision. President Lee justified this decision on the grounds that Lee was needed to boost South Korea’s bid for the 2018 winter Olympics, since Lee was a member of the International Olympic Committee. Lee Kun-hee denied any

wrongdoing and accused the media for ‘defining Samsung as a criminal organization’. (Kwak 2012: 85-86, McNeill and Kirk, 2013.)

To deal with the scandal and in an effort to control the press, Samsung withdrew its advertising from *Hankyoreh* and *Kyunghyang*. *Hankyoreh* and *Kyunghyang* had written critically about the scandal, and criticized Lee Kun-hee. Samsung virtually stopped advertising in them entirely, while still advertising quite heavily in the conservative newspapers *Chosun*, *JoongAng*, and *Dong-A*. Samsung’s boycott worked; as the ads disappeared, the critical articles also vanished. These papers stopped criticizing the Samsung Group altogether, effectively sending a message of just how powerful the conglomerate is. (Kwak 2012: 86-87.) *Hankyoreh* and *Kyunghyang* had to go as far as to cut and suspend wages to survive the financial situation Samsung’s withdrawal of advertisements put them in (Kim, J. 2011, Choi, B. 2009).

The threat of losing advertisement revenue alone is sometimes enough to discourage papers from criticizing Samsung. In 2010, when a book titled *Think Samsung* by Kim Yong-chul, the whistleblower of the 2007 scandal, came out, *Kyunghyang Daily* rejected an article written in favor of the book that also criticized Samsung. The columnist who wrote that article made this public online, and eventually *Kyunghyang* had no choice but to openly admit it had refused that article for fear that it might lose Samsung’s advertising again after having just gained it back. (Kwak 2012: 88, Kim, M. 2017.) It is obvious that not only did the withdrawal of advertisements silence the newspapers at the time of the scandal, but it also made them cautious of criticizing the company in the future as well. Samsung is the single largest advertiser in South Korea, so it holds a lot of sway even in companies not directly under its control (Kwak, J. 2015).

But this is not all. The trial against Jay Y. Lee and other Samsung executives in the Choi Soon-sil gate trials revealed the willingness of different media outlets to collude with Samsung as text messages sent to one of the executives, Jang Chung-gi, came to light as prosecutors’ evidence in the case. The messages were sent in August 2016 by different media executives and journalists. In their messages, they asked for different kinds of favors from Jang, either for personal gain or for their newspapers, and in return promised positive coverage for Samsung. (Kim, M. 2017.)

In other messages, Jang was briefed on senior appointments at one popular daily, and the trustworthiness of a managing editor at Yonhap News, the biggest news agency in South

Korea. There are also messages from his subordinates informing him of their efforts to censor and control Naver and Daum. (Kim, M. 2017.) Naver and Daum are the two biggest internet portals in South Korea, functioning in roles similar to Google in North America and Europe.

Most interestingly, and this is perhaps the most telling about Samsung's influence, the media coverage on these leaked texts was rather small. Furthermore, articles written about the issue were also quickly deleted, or they didn't appear on the main page of Naver where they would have been seen by most users. (Min 2017, Kim, D. 2017.) It is ironic how the press was either silenced or self-censored itself when reporting on a case about how Samsung controls the media.

As shown here, the media keeps quiet about Samsung out of fear of losing advertisement revenue, but also in the hopes of gaining something out of colluding with the conglomerate. In her interview with *The Guardian*, senior media researcher Pang Hui-kyong from Sogang university institute for media and culture confirms that this attitude of self-censorship definitely exists in South Korean news media. She also points out how many people feel that any crisis Samsung faces is also a national crisis, which means that protecting Samsung is also in best interest for the whole country. This 'Samsung ideology' warrants its preferential treatment in the media. (Kim, M. 2017.)

There are several cases where Samsung has showcased its willingness to control the media, but it is not the purpose of this thesis to go through them all here. In conclusion, it should suffice to say, that investigating and exploring whether the media provided Samsung any special treatment amidst its current scandal is well worth researching.

3 Methodology

In this chapter, I will formulate my research questions, hypotheses, and methods of research. I will explain how I formed my sample and how I processed it, and how the results of this research came to be.

3.1 Research outline

The aim of this study, as briefly mentioned in the previous chapters already, is to examine frames used by South Korean newspapers in reporting about the scandal(s) including Choi Soon-sil, Park Geun-hye, and Jay Y. Lee in 2016-2017. For the purpose of this research, I chose national newspapers to get the widest possible coverage. Regional newspapers are

smaller in market share and circulation, and since politics in South Korea tend to be very regionalized and thus the sentiments towards any politician can change depending on where they're from, it was for the best to choose newspapers with no specific regional ties. The national newspapers are all based in Seoul which of course shouldn't be considered politically neutral by any means, but given the papers' nationwide reach, it's probable they would have an incentive not to pick sides in the southwest-southeast divide.

As discussed earlier, most South Korean newspapers represent specific political alignments, be it conservative or progressive. As such, I deemed it important to choose one newspaper from both sides to make the comparison more interesting. *JoongAng* was chosen from the conservative spectrum due to its large market share, but also because of its direct ties to the Samsung Group. Analyzing its reporting on Jay Y. Lee especially would be of particular interest. From the more progressive end of the spectrum, I chose *Hankyoreh*. It's one of the biggest liberal newspapers on the market and as shown earlier, has been both willing and able to criticize Samsung in the past, although with quite severe consequences.

My original intent was to add even more newspapers to the sample to be better able to contrast conservative newspapers with progressive newspapers. With only two newspapers, it is harder to say if their journalistic choices are due to their political alignments, or just individual decisions made by the journalists in question. Problem was, however, that within the scope of this thesis it would not have been possible to analyze such a large sample effectively. Under these circumstances, I was only able to focus on two newspapers. Comparing all major national newspapers together will remain as a future possibility for further research into the matter.

News articles from both *Hankyoreh* and *JoongAng* were acquired online due to their easy accessibility by both me and the Korean general public. Internet coverage and usage is one of the highest in the world in South Korea, and as such, online newspapers are very accessible for most Koreans. The exact manner in which the article samples were collected will be explored in more detail later.

The research questions for this thesis are as follows:

1. How are articles concerning Choi framed by *Hankyoreh* and *JoongAng*?
2. How are articles concerning Park framed by *Hankyoreh* and *JoongAng*?
3. How are articles concerning Lee framed by *Hankyoreh* and *JoongAng*?
4. Do these frames change over time? If so, how and why?

The hypotheses, based on the historical analysis of press freedom and the typical patterns of media practice described in chapter 2, are as follows:

1. Jay Y. Lee's involvement in the scandal is most likely covered to a different extent and in different frames than that of Choi or Park.
2. Progressive *Hankyoreh* covers the scandal of the conservative president differently than conservative *JoongAng*.
3. Both newspapers frame their articles concerning Choi similarly due to her lack of real political or economic influence and her general unpopularity in the public eye.

To analyze my sample and to make interpretations out of it, I used both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative measures include taking into account the number of articles written on each person, the length of the articles, how many times certain words or themes appeared in the articles, etc. For qualitative approach, I employed elements of critical linguistics, critical discourse analysis, and framing analysis. The exact process will be described in more detail next.

3.2 Theoretical framework and methodology

I began looking for suitable theory and method from discourse analysis, seeing that it is quite commonly used in humanities, but after some research into the topic I decided to go with framing theory as my leading theoretical background instead. This is not to say that no elements of discourse analysis, and more specifically critical discourse analysis, were used in the process of writing this thesis, but framing theory should be considered the main theoretical framework for the analysis made. I will detail this more later but first, let us take a brief look at framing theory.

Framing theory and analysis is very common in the field of news analysis. The word 'frame' is also used in discourse analysis, but its definition is often different from the one used in media analysis (Tannen 1993, Ensink and Sauer 2003). It also appears that even within discourse analysis, the use and definition of frames can vary quite a bit, although this is not uncommon for any term, no matter what the field it belongs to. In the context of discourse analysis, the terms perspective and perspectivising seem to be closer to how news and media analysis understands frames and framing (Ensink and Sauer 2003).

According to Robert Entman, professor of media and public affairs at George Washington University, framing is "to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more

salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described. -- Framing -- includes similar functions: selection and highlighting, and the use of highlighted elements to construct an argument about problems and their causation, evaluation, and/or solution.” (1993, 52-53). In other words, framing refers to the ways in which media and the news can control or influence how the audience sees or understands any one event or issue.

Entman also points out how omissions also play a role in the process of framing: “frames select and call attention to particular aspects of the reality described, which logically means that frames simultaneously direct attention away from other aspects. Most frames are defined by what they omit as well as include, and the omissions of potential problem definitions, explanations, evaluations, and recommendations may be as critical as the inclusions in guiding the audience” (1993, 54). The words ‘the reality described’ are worth taking notice of. Even the news, that we often perceive to be objective and honest, can’t project the events exactly as they are to the most minute detail. Instead, they have to use words, that is to say, discourse, to describe them to us, and in doing so, whether intentional or not, they build in interpretations and assumptions about it- they frame it, and this cannot be avoided.

This is not to say that media is inherently biased, or that we cannot trust the media. What this is pointing out is that news media is a part of discourse, and as such, all the laws of discourse apply to it. Roger Fowler, who worked as a professor of English and Linguistics at the University of East Anglia and was a well-known critical linguist, calls news socially constructed: “Thus news is a practice: a discourse which, far from neutrally reflecting social reality and empirical facts, intervenes in -- ‘the social construction of reality’” (1991, 2). He doesn’t invoke the words frame or framing here, but it seems obvious that he is pointing out the same thing as Entman is. Fowler goes on to say that “-- because the institutions of news reporting and presentation are socially, economically and politically situated, all news is always reported from some particular angle. -- Anything that is said or written about the world is articulated from a particular ideological position: language is not a clear window but a refracting, structuring medium” (1991, 10). Here it is quite clear that we’re dealing with the same ideas and concepts, even if under slightly different names.

Entman also argues that frames and framing are closely connected to power. Frames in media can and do effectively shape the public perception of events and issues, which can have far-

reaching consequences. This is also the reason why political as well as economic institutions and actors want to have control over these frames, as well as discourse in general. (Entman 1993, Entman 2010.) This is not a particularly complicated idea to comprehend, as it should be quite obvious to us all that controlling the news or at least how certain topics are represented in the media is of great interest to those in power across all fields. This has also been proved to be true in chapter 2, where I discussed this particular topic in the case of South Korea and its press freedom.

Fowler also argues that since media groups and newspapers are companies with vested interests both politically and economically, it cannot be avoided that this shows in the way they choose and write news. Newspapers do not exist in a vacuum separate from the world. But Fowler also stresses the fact that certain ideologies etc. are not necessarily intentionally imbedded in the news. Rather, this stems from the language itself; all values are built in the language and in the modes of discourse available. (1991, 24.)

This is where critical discourse analysis comes in as well. Critical discourse analysis, as theorized most famously by Ruth Wodak, Emeritus Distinguished Professor and Chair in Discourse Studies at Lancaster University, and Norman Fairclough, Emeritus Professor of Linguistics at Lancaster University, is especially concerned with power in discourse, particularly when that power is instituting inequality, dominance, or social power abuse. Critical discourse analysis is also commonly used for the study of both media discourse and political discourse, since it specifically deals with social issues. Fairclough and Wodak, along with other prominent CDA thinkers, also state that power relations are discursive, discourse constitutes society and culture, and discourse does ideological work. How power should be understood in the context of discourse is as forms of control: groups that have control over others through different means such as violence, money, authority or discourse, also have power. Access to discourse and the ability to control it are two very important forms of power. (Wodak 2009, Wodak 2001, van Dijk, 2001.) These are all principles that are well applicable to the ideas of Entman and Fowler, even if they don't call themselves critical discourse analysts.

To summarize, since to study frames and framing is to study power, and since power is access to discourse and the ability to direct it as well, I think that framing theory and critical discourse analysis are two complementary theories particularly in the context of this thesis. In coding the articles that constitute my data, I have applied at least some of Fairclough's ten tools of

critical discourse analysis to uncover the way the articles have been framed through the discourse applied in writing them (1989). This was mostly because I could not find an exact description of methods in framing analysis, but also because of my familiarity with critical discourse analysis and its text analysis tools. Fairclough's tools, or questions for the analysis, are as follows:

1. What experiential values do words have? E.g. are there ideologically contested words, rewording, or overwording?
2. What relational values do words have? E.g. euphemistic words, markedly formal or informal words
3. What expressive values do words have?
4. What metaphors are used?
5. What experiential values do grammatical features have? E.g. types of processes and participants, agency, active or passive sentences
6. What relational values do grammatical features have? E.g. modes, relational modality, pronouns like 'we' and 'you'
7. What expressive values do grammatical features have?
8. How are sentences linked together? E.g. logical connectors, referring inside and outside the text
9. What interactional conventions, in other words, ways in which one participant controls the turns of others, are used?
10. What large-scale structures does the text have?

These ten questions acted as a guideline for the analysis made, to remind me to consider all these things within a text when making the framing analysis. Obviously, some of these weren't effective, such as number 9 which mostly refers to more interactional text than a written newspaper article, but these were employed when practical to really look at texts more deeply and to gain better insight of them.

3.3 Data collection

As stated previously, all articles were collected from the internet, on the official websites of *Hankyoreh* and *JoongAng*, using their own search functions. Articles were collected from 9 different events, 9 days total. These dates are Oct. 25th, Oct. 30th, Dec. 9th, Dec. 19th, Jan. 16th,

Jan. 19th, Feb. 17th, March 30th, and March 31st, 2016-2017. The events that took place on these dates were in order as follows: president Park's first public apology, Choi's arrival in South Korea, president Park's impeachment by the parliament, Choi's first court hearing, Choi's first hearing in the Constitutional Court, first arrest warrant on Lee, the court dismissal of the arrest warrant on Lee, the arrest of Lee, and the arrest of Park. The constitutional court hearing of Choi and the first arrest warrant on Lee fell on the same date, Jan. 16th, while the arrest of Park stretched over two days, March 30th and 31st.

These dates were chosen as important dates in the progress of the overall scandal. President Park's first apology only a day after the scandal began confirmed that the allegations made against her and Choi were basically true, as she admitted to having asked her for advice. Choi's sudden return to Korea also gained a lot of media attention, since it happened without any sort of warning and unbeknownst to even the police investigating the case. The parliament vote that impeached president Park is obviously an important event, and the reactions to it by the media are quite significant for the purpose of this analysis as well.

Although not listed in the original timeline for the scandal, Choi's court hearings can also be regarded to be of high importance. These occasions were the first opportunities where the general public could hear her express her side of the events, and the first time she appeared in public after her arrest back in November. Also, the progress of attempts to arrest Lee are quite interesting, particularly to assess how the media frames might have changed from his first arrest warrant request being denied to him finally being arrested. The arrest of Park was also something that the general public as well as the media was highly interested in, although after the Constitutional Court upheld the impeachment decision there probably wasn't much doubt about her involvement in this scandal.

Same search words were used for both newspapers, consisting of the full name of the person in question and whatever the relevant event was called. Search words were all entered in Korean, and the search results were limited to that specific date only. All search results that came up from that date were included in the sample except in the case of the impeachment vote on Dec. 9th due to the sheer volume of articles published that day in both newspapers. In order to avoid skewing the sample ratios too much and because I deemed the initial reaction to the impeachment vote the most telling, only articles published within the 1-1.5 hours from the impeachment vote were included. The number of these articles from the first hour alone ended up totaling what *Hankyoreh* and *JoongAng* would typically publish in a day on one

given topic, whereas the total of articles written on that date would have far exceeded the total number of articles in the sample. Coding the articles from the first hour or so already made the papers' frames quite obvious, and including more articles in the sample wouldn't have changed anything.

Some irrelevant articles were also omitted from the sample, if the article did not concern the event in question at all and only mentioned it in passing somehow, which brought it up in the search results. This happened especially with *JoongAng*, as it seems to produce articles in much bigger quantity than *Hankyoreh*. Duplicates were also eliminated, since they wouldn't have provided anything worthwhile to the sample. Editorials were included in the sample in the hopes that they would give a better idea of the papers' stance on these issues.

Some articles that came up in the search results could not be accessed, suggesting that these articles had been deleted, although I am not sure why these deleted articles would come up in the search results. This was a reoccurring problem with *Hankyoreh*, especially in the events concerning Jay Y. Lee. I cannot say if these articles were deleted due to controversy, if they were deleted by the independent decision of the newspaper itself or if it was forced to do so, or why the articles appeared in the search but could not be accessed at all. What is peculiar about this is that rather than giving dead links, all links were functional but instead of leading to the corresponding article, they would lead to totally different articles. One of these "replacement" articles was a movie review, and another was an obscure article from a couple of years ago. All the links in the deleted articles, as they came up in the search results, lead to these two replacements, which I considered quite odd.

I did not have this same issue with *JoongAng*. That is not to say that they haven't deleted any articles, but at least such deleted headlines did not appear in the search results. I don't know enough about website coding etc. to understand why deleted articles would come up in the search results, but should I find out anything about the matter later on, I will be sure to report it.

All articles were copied and pasted into two text files, one for *JoongAng* and one for *Hankyoreh*, with pictures, captions and headlines all attached. The number of articles collected from *JoongAng* is 111 articles in total, while articles from *Hankyoreh* total 95. The length of *Hankyoreh* articles is slightly longer on average, as the word count of all the 95 articles is approximately 30,000 words. The total word count for *JoongAng* was slightly less,

around 25,000 words. In conclusion, *JoongAng* publishes more articles, but they have a tendency to be a lot shorter than articles published by *Hankyoreh*.

3.4 Coding

All articles were given a code number for the purpose of effective organization and identification. Articles from *Hankyoreh* were coded as H001, H002, H003, etc. and articles from *JoongAng* were coded as J001, J002, J003, etc. These identification numbers will be used in the analysis section of this thesis to refer to the articles used as examples, since referring to the articles by their full headline could prove quite inconvenient.

Then, all articles were coded by the article type that they fall under. The categories used for this are news, commentary, editorial, feature, or other. The article type can have an effect on its perceived credibility. For example, articles perceived as news might be seen as more unbiased and reliable than an editorial written by one journalist from their own perspective. The article type can be a part of the framing process, and as such was deemed important to note down.

Articles were also coded for the themes and topics that were brought up in the article. This was partially a cumulative process, in which themes and topics were added to the list if they appeared frequently in the texts and seemed important for the frames in question. Each topic was given a number for the ease of writing them down in the codebook. The final list of themes and topics is as follows:

1. Sewol-ferry
2. Mir Foundation and K-Sports Foundation
3. religion
4. Park's history with Choi (mainly before the 2000s)
5. references to historical events
6. North Korea
7. Chung Yoo-ra
8. 2015 Samsung merger
9. Jay Y. Lee's father Lee Kun-hee
10. Park and Choi Taemin
11. clothes, makeup, plastic surgery, appearance
12. Saneuridang (New Frontier Party, Park's party)

13. impeachment
14. other people involved in the scandal (not Park, Choi, or Lee)
15. reactions and responses to the event(s) from people
16. special prosecution team
17. nationalist sentiments
18. chaebols (not Samsung)

In the process of coding, all names and ways to refer to Park, Choi, and Lee were also listed. The ways in which people are referred to obviously speaks for how they're being perceived, or how the writer wants these people to be perceived. All titles and names were thus written down for the purpose of analysis.

One category of coding is whether the article perceived the event in question as positive, negative, neutral, or if it mixed both positive and negative attitudes. It is quite telling if the news of someone's arrest is framed as a negative occurrence, or a positive one, and such it was deemed important for the analysis. The critical discourse analysis tools explained earlier were employed to determine how each article portrayed the event, so things such as word choices etc. were considered when deciding how to code the article.

Some articles couldn't be coded in this section, mostly because they didn't directly write about the event at hand. Forcing an article into any of these categories just for the sake of it did not seem honest, so such articles were simply coded as "no answer", although effort was made to use that as little as possible.

Another category used is to see if the articles perceived the person in question guilty or not guilty from the allegations made against them. By framing someone as guilty, the newspapers and media at large can have a large impact on the public perception of this issue. This doesn't necessarily mean that it will have an effect the outcome of the final court ruling, but it can also be speculated that if the public opinion on someone is that they're guilty, the court's decision might not change the public's perception. As such, the media frames on this can prove quite influential.

These categories of guilty or not guilty weren't of course applicable to all articles or to all events, but they were used when possible. These were decided through a number of factors. If the article dedicates a lot of time and space to list the person's alleged crimes, takes time to present proof of these alleged crimes, omits any evidence in favor of this person, insists strongly on the arrest or the impeachment of this person, and/or rejoices the arrest or the

impeachment of this person, then the article was coded as framing the person as guilty. If the article dedicates a lot of time to defend this person, omits allegations made against them, calls for the allegations to be dismissed, attempts to shift the blame elsewhere, and/or casts doubt on the prosecutors or the special prosecution team, then the article is coded as framing the person as not guilty.

Last but certainly not least, all articles were coded based on their generic frames. This process was also partially cumulative, as the initial frames proved to be insufficient or too limiting. The initial frames were created based on the hypotheses made before the coding process started, and later frames were added as the coding progressed and called for these additional frames. Mainly this concerns the mixed frames, as I did not think of adding those to the list initially, which was completely my mistake. The final list of frames is as follows:

1. positive special prosecution team frame
2. positive Park frame
3. positive Samsung/Lee frame
4. negative special prosecution team frame
5. negative Park frame
6. negative Samsung/Lee frame
7. negative Choi frame
8. positive Choi frame
9. unclear frame
10. mixed Park frame
11. mixed Choi frame
12. mixed Samsung frame
13. mixed special prosecution team frame

Mixed frame means that the article uses both negative and positive themes. The category 9, the unclear frame, was used as sparingly as possible. No so called neutral frames were listed, because no such thing as unbiased or neutral language truly exists. All words and all discourse carries meanings, whether we want it or not; values are built into the language and that cannot be erased. When we choose words to express something, we also inherently express values, ideologies, etc. (see Fowler 1991, Wodak 2009.) As such, I don't think claiming any one frame as 'neutral' accurately represents language or discourse; even listing mere facts still includes some bias, because we still have to choose which facts to include and which ones we

should omit, and using language to express these facts means that we are shaping them through discourse. Neutrality is simply not something discourse is capable of.

Hence, the unclear frame does not mean neutrality. It was used for articles that were typically very short and read more as lists of statements or facts than fully fleshed out articles and as such, held very little information to judge how the event was being framed. Sometimes this category was also used for articles that weren't quite related to Choi, Park, Lee or the special prosecution team and as such were impossible to code in the other categories. One such example is J017 which is written about Choi's lawyer Lee Gyeong-je and his educational background and work experience. I included this article in the sample thinking that in it, I might be able to see an attempt to discredit him, express doubt over his motives or honesty, but no such things come up in the very brief article. As such, it was impossible to categorize it as anything else but unclear.

The frames were assigned to each article based on a number of factors, mostly relying on tools from critical discourse analysis. Such things as word choices, grammatical choices, sentence structures, etc. were examined to analyze how the event and the people in question were framed. Previously introduced categories of coding were also used for this purpose. If, for example, an article frames Park's impeachment as a positive event, then it would be quite likely that it would use an overall negative Park frame as well, or at least a mixed Park frame. I will explain further how these frames are like in the next chapter.

4 Analysis and findings

Since the coding methods used produced both quantitative and qualitative data, this analysis section will take a look at both of these things to form more solid conclusions out of the research sample. First, I will go over the quantitative findings, as those will then be helpful in the qualitative analysis of the sample.

4.1 Quantitative findings

As stated previously, *Hankyoreh* and *JoongAng* have slight differences in their publication styles. While *Hankyoreh* publishes less articles, on average they are longer than those published by *JoongAng*. The average length of *Hankyoreh* articles is 330 words, while that of *JoongAng* articles is 219 words. This is a significant difference, over 100 words, although there is no way to know if all readers actually commit to reading articles from start to finish. As such, shorter articles might prove more effective, but this depends completely on how

these articles are being consumed. I have no data on this, so I cannot say anything more concrete about it.

The number of times each theme or topic appeared in each newspaper were calculated together to see which themes appeared most frequently, and to see if there are any significant differences between the two newspapers. The number of times each theme or topic appeared in the newspapers are as follows:

theme or topic	<i>Hankyoreh</i>	<i>JoongAng</i>
1. Sewol-ferry	11	6
2. Mir/K-Sports	34	15
3. religion	1	1
4. Park's history with Choi	3	1
5. history	24	20
6. North Korea	1	1
7. Chung Yoo-ra	19	9
8. Samsung merger	15	11
9. Lee Kun-hee	5	3
10. Park and Choi Taemin	1	0
11. clothes, makeup, plastic surgery, appearance	9	19
12. Saneuridang	12	11
13. impeachment	34	25
14. others involved	30	13
15. reactions and responses	34	48
16. investigation (team)	64	68
17. nationalist sentiments	33	31
18. chaebols	17	15

As seen here, some of these themes and topics are not important at all to either *Hankyoreh* or *JoongAng*. Religion was mentioned only once by both newspapers, which is interesting given how much media attention Choi's ties to her father's church and 'shamanism' were given in the Western, English speaking media. The only references to religion in *Hankyoreh* are made in one column written by a priest, while *JoongAng* posted one article where Choi is referred to as a shaman. This is not done by the journalist themselves but in an Instagram post that the journalist is reporting about. This is a rather drastic difference from the Western media reports on the scandal, which almost always bring up the subject in some capacity. This was also why the category was initially added to the list.

There are a couple of plausible explanations for this. Maybe the religious connections were simply not worth reporting about for *Hankyoreh* and *JoongAng*; this is something that is widely known to the Korean public, and as such it's not necessary to even mention it. It could also be that for the Western media, the pseudo-shamanist and pseudo-Christian connections were simply very exotic and exciting, and as such something worth writing about. This could also be a sampling issue, because it is possible that the topic was largely written about, just in different contexts than what was included in the sample.

Very little attention is also given to Park's past with Choi Taemin. This is also a reoccurring theme in the Western media, but *JoongAng* and *Hankyoreh* both seem uninterested to bring that up. Again, this could probably be simply because it's not news worthy in South Korea, given how common knowledge Park's ties to Choi Taemin seem to be, while all of this is new and scandalous to the English speaking audience. Equally unimportant seems to be Park and Choi's longstanding friendship, which is also hardly written about in the articles in this sample.

The most popular themes and topics appear to be investigation and the special prosecution team, nationalist sentiments, reactions and responses to the events in this scandal, and the impeachment. The investigation and the special prosecution team are mentioned 64 times in *Hankyoreh*, and 68 times in *JoongAng*. This is simply due to the nature of events chosen for this sample, as they're mostly related to arrests and court hearings that are indeed closely tied to the investigation into the alleged crimes committed by Park, Choi, and Lee. As such, it's quite natural to bring up the investigation and the prosecution team.

The second most popular are reactions and responses to these events, mentioned 34 times in *Hankyoreh* and 48 times in *JoongAng*. Both newspapers dedicated a lot of articles to reporting on how people reacted to new turns and events in the process of the scandal. Politicians and

normal citizens alike are represented in both newspapers, although *JoongAng* appears to favor politicians and other official instances over ‘netizens’ and ordinary people, while the opposite seems to be true for *Hankyoreh*. *JoongAng* seems to prefer referring to official instances and organizations, while *Hankyoreh* interviews and quotes individuals either online or on the streets.

Nationalist sentiments are mentioned 33 times in *Hankyoreh*, and 31 times in *JoongAng*, which is almost one third of all articles. These nationalist sentiments are often expressed in quite emotional language, and often speak of the past, the present, and the future of Korea as a country and a nation. Oftentimes these kinds of sentiments are expressed as feelings and thoughts of the entire nation, as though it’s something everyone agrees upon. The best interest of all Korean people is often spoken of, be it in the context of the economy, politics, or something else. *JoongAng* and *Hankyoreh* focus on slightly different things, and employ these nationalist sentiments differently to argue for their own view points, but that will be explored in more depth in the qualitative analysis section.

Impeachment is also predictably one of the more popular themes, mentioned 34 times in *Hankyoreh* and 25 times in *JoongAng*. Partially this can be explained with the fact that one of the events chosen for this sample is the actual impeachment of president Park by the parliament in December of 2016. However, the calls for her impeachment began much earlier than that. *Hankyoreh* brings up the possibility of impeachment as early as Oct. 25th, 2016, the first day included in this sample, which is the day that Park made her first public apology. *JoongAng* is not as quick to call for impeachment, most probably because of its matching conservative political alignment with president Park.

The biggest differences between *Hankyoreh* and *JoongAng* are in the number of times they mention the Mir foundation and the K-Sports foundation, Chung Yoo-ra, clothes and makeup, and others involved in the scandal. None of these differences are easy to explain, as there seems to be no obvious reason for any of them. They are worth mentioning, however, as some of these differences are quite considerable.

Hankyoreh mentions the Mir foundation and the K-Sports foundation a total of 34 times, while *JoongAng* mentions them only 15 times. This could just come down to their differences in journalistic style. Since *Hankyoreh* tends to write longer articles, it has more space to mention things that give background to the issue at hand, which this topic could be understood

to be. It could also be that *JoongAng* journalists assumed this to be more common knowledge, something that did not need to be mentioned as often.

Chung Yoo-ra, Choi's daughter, is mentioned a total of 19 times by *Hankyoreh*, while *JoongAng* mentions her only 9 times. *Hankyoreh* often mentions her together with her mother, calling them 'a mother-daughter duo' and subsequently suggesting that she is also guilty of the same crimes as her mother. *JoongAng* mainly mentions her together with the dressage horse that Samsung or Jay Y. Lee sponsored for her as a part of the total bribes given to Choi and Park, but hardly ties her together with her mother and the allegations made against her. Chung Yoo-ra is also mentioned a couple of times in articles about Choi's court hearings, as Choi herself brings her up as she laments how the scandal has destroyed not only her life, but also that of her daughter's.

Clothes, makeup, plastic surgery, and appearance get mentioned 19 times in articles from *JoongAng*, but only 9 times in *Hankyoreh*. This theme is mostly used in articles related to Park or Choi, while hardly any comments are made about what Lee is wearing or how he looks, which was to be expected. Especially Park's signature style in clothes and hair get a lot of attention from both newspapers, but *JoongAng* dedicates just as much time to describing what Choi was wearing to her court hearings. One whole article is dedicated to her hair pin, that apparently caused some controversy due to how 'inappropriate' it was. Park's signature hair style, an up-do that she has sported since the 1970s, also gets a lot of attention from both newspapers as it appears to have angered a lot of people when she arrived at her arrest warrant hearing on March 30th, 2017.

The fact that the women's appearance gains so much media attention could speak for underlying misogyny. It could be worth looking into the gender of the journalists who wrote these articles to see if there is a pattern there, although it is also possible for women to have misogynistic attitudes and as such, the gender of the journalist might tell us very little. South Korea is not the most progressive society when it comes to women's rights and equality, and as such it isn't surprising that the women are targeted for their hair and clothes while Lee is not. But extending this into the field of feminist or gender studies is out of the scope of this thesis, and will have to remain a future possibility. With this data, it's impossible to tell what caused *JoongAng* to write about this topic more than *Hankyoreh*.

Lastly, a big disparity can be seen in how many times others involved in the scandal get mentioned by each newspaper. *Hankyoreh* writes about these people 30 times, while

JoongAng does it only 13 times. These include people from the Park administration, Cha Eun-taek and other friends of Choi's, Samsung Group executives, as well as Chung Yoo-ra. It is hard to say why this might be. Perhaps *JoongAng* journalists only wanted to focus on the key people in the scandal, or perhaps they wrote about these people in separate articles that did not mention Park, Choi, or Lee and thus weren't selected into the sample. The shorter average length of the articles could also play a role in why these people, whose involvement in the scandal was not as important, were not mentioned as often.

While the different frames will be discussed in more detail in the next part of the analysis, as they have more to do with qualitative aspects than quantitative, it's worth showing concretely how the different frames were divided between the newspapers and the number of times they were used. One article can have more than one frame, and thus the total of how many times each frame was used can and will exceed the number of articles in the sample.

frame	<i>Hankyoreh</i>	<i>JoongAng</i>
positive special prosecution team	49	31
positive Park	0	0
positive Samsung/Lee	3	19
negative special prosecution team	2	10
positive Park	46	32
negative Samsung/Lee	24	6
negative Choi	37	30
positive Choi	0	0
unclear	4	8
mixed Park	1	9
mixed Choi	0	1
mixed Samsung/Lee	1	5
mixed special prosecution team	2	3

Some frames weren't used at all, which was to be expected. Neither *Hankyoreh* or *JoongAng* used the positive Choi frame, and *JoongAng* used the mixed Choi frame only once. This is

completely in accordance with the hypotheses made earlier. In fact, I did not even want to add the positive Choi frame to the list because I assumed it would not be used, but it seemed unfair to close off that possibility beforehand. Conducting the coding and discourse analysis proved my hypothesis to be true. It's quite telling that this frame was not used even once, and that the mixed frame also got so little use, as it speaks for how truly negatively she was and still is portrayed in the media.

Neither one of the newspapers used the positive Park frame, which is quite surprising for *JoongAng* but not for *Hankyoreh*. *Hankyoreh* attacked Park immediately when the scandal began, and began to call for her impeachment instantly, as has already been discussed. *Hankyoreh* only uses the mixed Park frame once, and the rest of the time paints her in a very negative light. This is all to be expected from a progressive newspaper, that probably has never supported Park even when she wasn't tangled in controversy. This matches the hypotheses made in advance.

What is surprising, though, is how *JoongAng* did not stand up for her either. It uses the mixed Park frame more than *Hankyoreh*, and employs the negative frame less, so overall its portrayal of Park is less negative than that of *Hankyoreh*'s. With that being said, I did expect to see *JoongAng* support then president Park more openly than it did. It is possible that *JoongAng* has not agreed with her and her policies in the past either; the conservative field in politics is quite broad after all, and it's possible that *JoongAng* has not supported Park for whatever reason even before the scandal. It's beyond the scope of this thesis to explore this much further, but it could be of interest to investigate how *JoongAng* reported about Park in the past, and how *JoongAng*'s use of frames compares to other conservative newspapers.

Another big gap between the two newspapers is in the positive Samsung/Lee frame. *Hankyoreh* uses it only two times, while *JoongAng* uses it up to 19 times. The reverse of this can be seen in the negative Samsung/Lee frame, which was used 24 times by *Hankyoreh* and only 6 times by *JoongAng*. *Hankyoreh*'s portrayal of Lee and Samsung is a lot more negative, or at least more critical, while *JoongAng* stands by Samsung, for quite obvious reasons. These numbers are not surprising, aside from the fact that I expected *Hankyoreh* to perhaps be more cautious in attacking or criticizing Lee or the Samsung Group. But then again, most of the deleted articles in *Hankyoreh* were Samsung related, so it could be that they regretted their bravery later.

Hankyoreh was also way more in favor of the special prosecution team and the investigation process at large. It used the positive special prosecution team frame 49 times, while *JoongAng* only did so 31 times, and *Hankyoreh* also used the negative special prosecution team frame just 2 times. *JoongAng* used it up to 10 times. The only two times *Hankyoreh* criticized the prosecution team or portrayed it negatively was when it demanded more from it and accused it of not doing enough, which speaks a lot for how much in favor of it the newspaper really was. *JoongAng* wasn't against it either, per say, but it had a lot more negative things to say about the investigation and prosecution, especially in relation to Samsung and Lee.

Overall, *JoongAng* used more of the mixed frames than *Hankyoreh*. This could be a journalistic choice on *Hankyoreh*'s side, to be more straightforward and more black-and-white in its journalism. Then again, these issues are something that the general public quite strongly agreed on, if the plummeting ratings for president Park and the large-scale demonstrations are anything to go by. For a progressive newspaper, it was probably quite an easy decision to attack the conservative, unpopular president and her friend. For *JoongAng*, though, the issue might have been more complicated, as its political alignment is on the conservative side and it has very direct connections to the Samsung Group and the Lee family as well.

4.2 Qualitative findings: what are the frames truly like?

This is the main focus of this thesis, where I will explain the frames *Hankyoreh* and *JoongAng* used in more detail, and compare them with one another. As shown in the previous section, there are some drastic differences in what frames were used and to what extent they were employed, but there are also differences in what each frame contains for each newspaper. Exploring and explaining those differences, as well as similarities, is the purpose of this section. This part will be divided into subsections, one for each person, to make reading and comprehending this analysis easier.

4.2.1 Frames used for Park

As stated previously, *Hankyoreh*'s portrayal of Park is more negative overall when compared to *JoongAng*. *Hankyoreh* began to raise questions about impeachment and if there were any grounds for it immediately after Park's apology on Oct. 25th, 2016. *Hankyoreh* immediately frames Park as incompetent, and as a traitor, a betrayer of the nation's trust. A lot of nationalist sentiments are brought forward to express how devastating the situation is to the whole

Korean public, and to South Korea's democracy. Park is thus not only framed as a weak individual, but as someone who has rightfully earned the wrath of the entire Korean nation by endangering its future and democratic principles.

“Can we even call this a country? – Right now, our country has fallen into a shameful state not possible even in the feudal times, let alone in a 21st century democratic society.

President Park gave her apology in the afternoon on the 25th. But her speech was not an apology, but an excuse. ‘I have received help from Choi in the past in times of difficulty, in things like general advice on my speeches’, she stuck with her excuses. She did not have any consideration for the seriousness of the situation, or shame.” [H004]

“Shim Sang-jong, the representative for Justice Party, said: ‘We cannot accept a false apology that only ridiculed the nation. If she tries to ignore the rage of the nation that has now even brought up the issue of impeachment, she will be met with great resistance from the entire country.’” [H006]

“After president Park’s apology aired today at 4 p.m., another netizen wrote on Twitter: ‘President herself admitted to the puppet leader accusations. We received an apology but she needs to receive a punishment. A president who has made the very foundation of our democratic republic falter needs to face consequences that match her responsibility [as president].’” [H007]

The nationalist sentiments and attack on Park continues when Park is impeached Dec. 9th, 2016. *Hankyoreh* calls the successful impeachment ‘a victory for the nation and democracy’, and contributes the impeachment to the continuous protests held in Seoul and other big cities in Korea. Park is effectively framed as an enemy of the wellbeing of all Korean people, an evil to be defeated only by bringing everyone together in the protest movements. Pictures of crowds holding the Korean flag are shown, protesters are portrayed crying tears of joy, and promises are made that the protests won’t stop until everything wrong in politics has been weeded out. Bringing Park down is shown as something empowering to the entire Korean people.

“Gyeonggi Nam Gyeong-pil and Lee Je-jeong: ‘the impeachment is a victory for the nation and for democracy’” [H013]

“Head of Kwangju Park Geun-hye impeachment movement: ‘impeachment through the strength of the nation and the candle light vigils’” [H014]

“Lee Je-myeong: ‘the impeachment result is a beginning for a revolution for our country’” [H015]

“Citizens rejoice the impeachment result: ‘the nation has won’” [H016]

“Even despite the cold weather, the citizens gathered at the National Assembly to witness the historical event were embracing each other and jumping up and down, and some were even shedding tears in overwhelming joy.” [H016]

Park is also very closely related to her party, Saneuridang, and a lot of articles dedicate attention to the party’s reactions and responses to the scandal. Thus, she is framed having a very direct connection with the party, perhaps as a way to attack Saneuridang given that its political views differ greatly from those of *Hankyoreh*. Not even the fact that Saneuridang members largely participate in voting Park out of office is celebrated or even mentioned in the articles in the sample, as the impeachment is solely attributed to the Korean nation as a whole. All articles from the first hour following the impeachment are very reactionary: they’re all interviews and quotes from people celebrating the impeachment, and given how fast they were published after the vote result was made public, they have a very spontaneous feel.

Park’s supporters are mentioned for the first time in articles from March 30th and 31st, 2017, as they gathered at the court house to show support at the dawn of her court hearing for her arrest warrant. But even her supporters are shown in very negative light, portrayed causing chaos and trouble to school children trying to get to school, as the supporters had gathered in front of the school’s main gate. They’re reported having even cursed at the children and their mothers, which is sure to minimize any sympathy readers might have for them. [H083] It also helps in framing Park more negatively; if only people like this support her, she probably isn’t a very good person, or someone anyone decent would show support towards.

Park’s arrest is also greeted with great joy in *Hankyoreh* articles. A lot of attention is given to how her life conditions will be like in prison, clearly gleeful of how she will be brought down from riches to such humble life. It is probably seen as humiliating for her to be forced to live as a regular prisoner, which is obviously delightful to those who want to see her suffer. Having been framed as someone evil who can only be brought down by effort and vigilance from the entire Korean nation, her suffering is clearly rightful as well within this frame. Cheap meals, no access to beauty products of her choice, wearing prison clothes, and being confined to a small space are mentioned time and time again across the articles in the sample.

“Former president Park will live in a 10,5 m2 room, eat 1,440 won meals, and do her dishes herself” [H092]

Furthermore, her fate is compared to that of president Roh Tae-woo and president Chun Doo-hwan. It is mentioned several times that she is the third president to be arrested like this, and allegations made against her, the investigation and the court process, as well as her living conditions in prison are all compared to those of president Roh and president Chun. As some readers might know, Chun was sentenced to death and Roh to 22,5 years in prison in 1996 for treason, mutiny, and corruption. They were both pardoned the following year, but comparing Park to these two really underlines the seriousness of her alleged crimes. While it is not quite right to compare anything Park is accused of doing, save for maybe the bribery charges, to what Roh and especially Chun did, grouping her together with these two unpopular ex-presidents only adds to the negative frame she is portrayed in.

Parallels are also drawn between Park and her father, president Park Chung-hee. Her arrest is celebrated as the end of ‘Park Chung-hee and Park Geun-hye father-daughter duo’ era. This is kind of a strange connection to make, seeing that Park Chung-hee’s rule ended in 1979, almost 40 years ago, so it is quite unclear how Park Geun-hye’s administration could be seen as continuing that. Granted, it was Park Chung-hee’s presidency that really created the chaebol system in Korea and solidified it to its current form, but there have been several presidents in office since then who have also facilitated it. In this regard, Park Geun-hye’s role is quite small, and making such sweeping statements doesn’t seem well-grounded in facts.

It does fit *Hankyoreh*’s negative Park frame, however, to make such statements. Since she’s portrayed as the personification of everything wrong in Korean politics especially in regard to the chaebols and corruption, connecting her with the historical narrative and the main starting point of this problem, which happens to be her father’s presidency, makes sense. It’s a good narrative, to portray her as continuing the unpopular legacy of her father. Admittedly, these statements are only made in editorials and not in news articles, which does give them the title of being just an individual’s opinion. Nonetheless, these are still quite interesting claims to make, although I cannot say if other newspapers or media outlets made matching ones, which would make them perhaps slightly less unsubstantial.

“Former president Park’s arrest brings an end to an era. The Park Chung-hee paradigm that has lasted over 40 years will be set aside and we will begin the cleansing rituals in order to make this country anew.” [H090]

“With the legal judgment of ex-president Park, the era of the father-daughter duo will now end. The evils that have accumulated in politics, economy, and society for half a century will finally be settled with this arrest, and it should become the starting point that will open a new era of righteousness and common sense.” [H095]

JoongAng’s portrayal and frames are overall slightly less negative compared to those used by *Hankyoreh*. When Park first apologized to the public and admitted to seeking help and advice from Choi, *JoongAng* did not immediately call for impeachment like *Hankyoreh* did. But it is critical of her, pointing out how her speech clarified close to nothing and how there are many things that she should explain better. It does not accuse her of anything directly, but instead states across many articles how what she said was not enough and she needs to be more open and honest. Rather than immediately calling for her removal from office, *JoongAng* instead demands for the truth:

“Through identifying the controversy surrounding Choi with the help of a special prosecutor team, this can be corrected.

Even within the ruling camp the demands for a thorough probe through the means of special investigation team and inspection of administration are rising. – The president and the Blue House should not postpone the investigation and should instead cooperate actively. By minimizing the chaos within the government, we can avoid the economic crisis and safety concerns.” [J006]

“President Park should explain herself to the nation honestly and in detail. The Choi Soon-sil issue has exceeded the level of corruption and irregularities of just one civilian. In the case of the Blue House’s system of managing the country collapsing, this is a challenge that threatens the very existence of [our] democracy. President Park needs to reveal in what kind of relationship [to her] could Choi come to wield such absolute power, so that the nation can understand it with common sense.” [J007]

This could suggest the underlying hope that by being honest and sincere, president Park could clear things up and save the government from falling into chaos. She might not be entirely innocent in all of this, but she can prove her character by cooperating with the investigation into the scandal and being truthful with the nation. *JoongAng* is thus a lot more merciful than *Hankyoreh* in leaving open the possibility that she could perhaps explain all this, and rectify the situation. Impeachment is only mentioned once in an article where *JoongAng* collected comments from netizens regarding the issue, but it isn’t mentioned by a journalist even once.

When Park is impeached, the tone in *JoongAng* articles is quite subdued and serious, especially in comparison to *Hankyoreh*. It stresses how heavy the atmosphere was at the parliament at the time of the voting and how grim everyone looked as they cast their ballots:

“In the midst of the vote for the impeachment motion for president Park Geun-hye, the atmosphere in the National Assembly is extremely dampened and sour. – Aside from the camera shutter noises from the reporters present, not even a single noise can be heard. Even after assembly member Kim finished explaining the proposal, no one clapped and only the People’s party members exclaimed a simple ‘well done’.” [J025]

It also dedicates a long article to describing Park’s political career, its ups and downs, as well as writes several articles on how the impeachment trial in the Constitutional Court is going to go, how it will be different from Roh Moo-hyun’s impeachment trials, and speculations on what the outcome could be. These articles have clearly been prepared beforehand, in the case that the impeachment motion did pass, which is in stark contrast with the spontaneous reaction from *Hankyoreh*.

Whereas *Hankyoreh* almost exclusively writes about the reactions of regular citizens, mostly those gathered outside demonstrating in favor of the impeachment, *JoongAng* only cites politicians and other well-known figures. In the articles in the sample, ordinary citizens’ reactions are not mentioned even once. Two articles, rather than celebrating the impeachment, only highlight the fact how this could have dangerous effects on the economy, and the security and stability of Korea:

“‘We have to quickly summon a special session of the National Assembly and form consultative groups with the political parties. We need groups at least in three different fields. Even though it’s the weekend, we must act quickly and form consultative groups for economy, national security, and for cleaning out the deep-rooted evils the Park Geun-hye gate revealed,’ former party representative An proposed.” [J035]

This is a very emotionless initial response to the impeachment in comparison to how *Hankyoreh* celebrated it. The peril is not over yet, even though Park has now been impeached. Speculating on the outcome of the Constitutional Court ruling suggests that there is a chance the Court would not uphold the parliament’s vote, and there are also economy and safety related concerns to worry about. Compared to the overwhelming joy and relief portrayed in *Hankyoreh*, this is a very stark contrast. While *JoongAng* doesn’t side with Park at all, it still frames the impeachment as less positive than *Hankyoreh* does.

When Park goes in for her arrest warrant hearing, *JoongAng* dedicates a lot of articles to her appearance and facial expressions as she walks in to the court house. It describes her clothes, her hair, as well as her serious expression in great detail, even comparing change in her demeanor over the past 9 days leading up to the court hearing:

“Today, at around 10.30a.m., ex-president Park arrived at the court house and headed inside toward the court room number 321 in the third floor without a single word, her expression stern the entire time. -- On morning of the 22nd [of March], after the conclusion of her hearing as a suspect as well as the reading of police records that lasted through the night, her expression was even brighter as she headed to her home in Samsung-dong. On that day, as ex-president Park entered the court building, she smiled brightly as her supporters.” [J100]

She’s portrayed as looking gloomy and serious, and said to have no strength left in her. This is an image of someone who’s given up all hope, or someone who cannot hide how guilty they feel. Perhaps possibly both. *JoongAng* articles leave this up to the readers’ interpretation. It’s also possible to argue that she’s portrayed this way to rouse feelings of pity, but it is unlikely that anyone would have felt sorry for her no matter what.

When her arrest is announced by the court, *JoongAng* mostly focuses on how historical and record-breaking all of this is. The court hearing was the longest in Korean history, which is mentioned several times, and it’s also highlighted how she’s the first president to be impeached and then arrested. She’s also obviously the first female president, which is also mentioned across a few articles. It’s unclear what the emphasis on words such as record, historical, and legacy is supposed to do. It could be done in order to emphasize how awful of a president she was, but it could also just be done to make the headlines catchier. In the time of ‘click bait’, this is also a probable answer.

“Breaking News: Park’s arrest warrant hearing ends after 9 hours... the record of longest time in history” [J103]

“‘The first and the longest’... the legacy of now arrested ex-president Park” [J106]

“First arrested ex-president in 22 years, seated between two police officers in the car” [J108]

“Entering through the front gate of Seoul Detention Center at 4.45 a.m. ... first female president jailed” [J109]

Her shameful position as an arrested suspect is also a theme that keeps reappearing. It is mentioned how she had to ride the police car instead of the Blue House cars, which is a

significant downgrade, that she had to sit in between two police officers and that she will have to dress in a prisoner's outfit from now on instead of her own clothes:

“Instead of the ‘battle uniform’ style blue coat that she has been wearing constantly to the latest important events, such as her hearing as a suspect on the 22nd of this month, former president Park will now be forced to wear the prison uniform.” [J110]

This matches the position *Hankyoreh* takes on her arrest, although the tone of these articles is slightly more subdued. While *Hankyoreh* is more open about how gleeful it is to see Park arrested, *JoongAng* isn't quite so direct about it. This matches the general difference in frames used for Park between the two newspapers that we've already seen; even though *JoongAng* doesn't necessarily side with her, it's less negative in its portrayal of her than *Hankyoreh*.

JoongAng also mentions presidents Chun and Roh, but the parallels drawn between them and Park are not made as obvious as they are in *Hankyoreh* articles. The historical nature of this whole chain of events is mentioned several times, which could serve as an indirect reminder to the Korean audience of presidents who've also been brought to court for a reason or another, but it's not as powerful as directly pointing out these comparisons. Her father also only gets one indirect mention when *JoongAng* points out the unusual situation of both father and daughter becoming presidents.

All in all, however, *JoongAng* doesn't have anything positive to say about Park at this point. The frames used shift towards the negative end of the spectrum as the scandal goes on. When the scandal is still new, *JoongAng* clearly hesitates to attack her too directly or to speak ill of her, but as time goes on and more evidence surfaces, there's not much to say to defend her anymore. Especially when she goes in for her court hearing, Park has already been impeached both by the parliament and the Constitutional Court, which makes her guilt quite obvious, and not even a conservative newspaper can stand by her any longer.

4.2.2 Frames used for Choi

Although both newspapers portrayed Choi very negatively, their frames are slightly different from each other. As stated earlier, *Hankyoreh* often mentions Choi together with her daughter, thus attributing the wrongdoings to both of them, rather than just Choi herself. This is perhaps quite controversial, given Chung Yoo-ra's young age. If Choi had all that influence over the Park administration, the people working for it and the president herself, then one can only imagine what kind of power she would hold over her own daughter. At the time of all of this,

Chung Yoo-ra was in her teens and early twenties. It's perhaps unfair to tie her together with her mother's crimes as though she was actively participating in all of it. She might have been involved, but at the time of writing the articles in the sample there was no real evidence of that.

Hankyoreh almost always refers to Choi not just by her name, but as 비선 실세 (biseon shilse) Choi Soon-sil. The term could be translated as 'shadow leader' or 'puppet master', although it's not necessarily the most accurate translation. Essentially what it means is someone with the power to control an organization or people and their relationships without them even knowing about it. It is quite clear that this doesn't have any positive connotations to it. The words appear a total of 17 times in the *Hankyoreh* articles in the sample.

Other names given to Choi are 'ordinary citizen', 'ordinary person with no public post', and 국정농단 (gukjeong nongdan) which translates directly to 'government administration monopoly'. A more eloquent way to put that could be 'the person monopolizing the government administration'. These names and ways to refer to Choi really portray her as a sort of evil mastermind controlling the entire Park administration, which is supported by articles describing in minute detail the ways in which she did this.

When the news of Choi arriving to Korea break out, *Hankyoreh* is quick to demand for her immediate arrest, raising doubts about her motivation to return to Korea unannounced. This is also one of the few times that *Hankyoreh* ever criticizes the prosecution team and the police, as it accuses them of inaction and risking the chance that Choi might destroy evidence or plan shared lies with others involved in the scandal to 'get their stories straight'. Her actions are scrutinized to the last detail and questioned quite severely.

For example, Choi told the press through her lawyer that she requested the police to give her some time before calling her in for interrogation, citing bad health and jetlag. However, *Hankyoreh* articles strongly frame this as a complete lie, and instead stress the fact that the only reason why she would come back to Korea would be to take care of any evidence of her wrongdoings.

"Considering all this, there are now allegations being made that Choi's return [to Korea] aims to block the police investigation before it reaches the Blue House. – Choi's early arrival in Korea that she carried out so stealthily appears to have been carried out so she could block the investigation before it looks further into the Blue House." [H033]

“I’m suffering from a nervous breakdown to the point where I can’t get on a plane and my heart is in such a condition that I really can’t return [to Korea],’ Choi said in her interview with Segye Ilbo on the 27th but suddenly, only three days later, she got on a plane in London to fly back to Korea on the 30th. – The reason why these two [Choi and Cha Eun-taek] changed their minds so simultaneously seems to be ‘orders’ coming from the Blue House.” [H038]

All her actions are framed as very purposeful, even starting with her movements before arriving to South Korea. The fact that she flew in from London and not from Germany, where she was known to reside in, raises a lot of questions in *Hankyoreh*, and they eventually conclude that she must have hidden her daughter in Denmark before flying to Korea. Her every move is framed as calculative and intentional, fitting the frame and image of a shadow leader.

Articles on her first court hearing on Dec. 19th continue to add to that image. The fact that she denied all allegations made against her is repeated across most articles, and it’s framed as a calculated move to stall the impeachment trial in the constitutional court. Rather than viewing her claims of innocence as an effort to save herself, *Hankyoreh* frames this as a purposeful tactic to influence the impeachment trial as well. Also, as Choi’s defense lawyer demands the tablet computer that started the whole Choi gate to be investigated, to determine whether it can be used as evidence or not, *Hankyoreh* calls this yet another attempt from her side to stall things:

“As Choi keeps insisting that the tablet PC, that is not even included in her personal criminal charges, is not hers, people have begun to ask if she’s doing this to raise political debates over the issue.” [H058]

“The reason behind Choi’s strategy of denying everything and saying that the president hasn’t committed any crimes either is to not only erase charges against herself, but also against president Park. – ‘If Choi denies all charges in relation to conspiring together with president Park, there’s a chance that the impeachment trials in the Constitutional Court will take much longer,’ one district court judge said. ‘She denied all charges against her and president Park in court. If she admitted to even just one of them, the president’s defense could fall,’ a lawyer stated.” [H057]

The fact that her first court hearing took place in the same court room that was used for Chun Do-hwan and Roh Tae-woo’s trials as well is also mentioned several times. Like with Park,

these parallels drawn with Choi and these two men only help to solidify the idea of her as someone who's committed huge crimes. This only helps in building the negative frame of her.

For her second court hearing in the impeachment trial, *Hankyoreh* underlines heavily how uncooperative she is, highlighting every time she refuses to answer a question, claims to not know anything or that she cannot remember, or just denying everything. It's also mentioned several times how she raises her voice at the judges, which is obviously seen as something very disrespectful. Attention is brought to how much evidence there already is of her wrongdoings, discrediting everything she says quite directly. It's thus obvious how little *Hankyoreh* believes she's telling the truth.

“To questions presented by both sides, she either said she doesn't know or gave inconsistent answers, repeatedly showing her untrustworthiness and dishonesty.” [H069]

“Her tablet PC already revealed the truth about her making edits on the presidential speeches, the Dresden speech, the study book comments, and many others. Also the fact that the teacher who Cha Eun-taek recommended to Choi became the minister of culture and his uncle was nominated the head of education and culture has also come to light. – It is obvious that e.g. the attempt to raise an issue around the tablet PC's worth as evidence is just a concealed attempt to change the direction of the entire legal procedure.” [H070]

Overall, the negative Choi frame for *Hankyoreh* is that Choi is a manipulative liar, someone who is cunning and cannot be trusted, someone who knew well what she was doing and who had careful plans as to how to take care of everything even in the event that she got caught. Even being compared to Chun Do-hwan and Roh Tae-woo, it becomes obvious of how much of a bad person she is framed as being.

JoongAng also frames Choi in this negative manner, but the details of their frame are slightly different. *JoongAng* also refers to Choi as 비선 실세 (biseon shilse) or 'shadow leader' quite frequently, in 13 articles, but it also uses some even less flattering names. These include 'Gangnam host bar madam (owner)', 'fake prophet', '보안 손님 (boan sonnim)', and '아줌마 (ajumma)'. '아줌마' is an informal way to refer to an older woman, and not the type of language you would usually see in a newspaper, so calling Choi this is quite disrespectful towards her.

‘보안 손님’ translates directly to ‘security guest’ or ‘security visitor’. As such, this is a very nonsensical word and apparently, it’s not a commonly used word in Korean either. ‘Security visitor’ refers to someone who can freely come in to the Blue House, the president’s residence in Seoul, and be treated as the president’s honored guest by the staff at the Blue House. They’re not screened by the security guards, and they may come and go as they will. This is a word used by the staff at the Blue House about these types of visitors. (Jo 2016.) It is quite obvious how this applies to Choi, as her frequent visits to the Blue House have been public knowledge even before the Choi gate broke out in 2016.

As can be seen here, *JoongAng* uses quite colorful language when referring to Choi, sometimes in a very disrespectful way. This is no surprise, given how unpopular and outright despised Choi quickly became in the public eye. Using such language could of course be criticized as unprofessional, but given the general attitude towards Choi, it’s quite probable that no one saw an issue with this.

When Choi landed in South Korea on Oct. 30th, *JoongAng*’s reaction is quite similar to *Hankyoreh*’s. The urgency in arresting her is repeated across articles, and doubts about her motives to return to Korea are also questioned. Comparisons are even made to the famous Watergate scandal, further adding weight to this situation:

“An Cheol-su: ‘The Choi Soon-sil scandal is an even bigger threat to constitutional order than the Watergate scandal’” [J019]

Like *Hankyoreh*, *JoongAng* also criticizes the police and investigation team here for not acting fast enough and allowing Choi to walk free, possibly destroying evidence and meeting with other suspects to ‘set their stories straight’. In this, *JoongAng*’s negative frame of Choi matches *Hankyoreh*’s negative Choi frame to a great extent. She’s portrayed as quite dangerous and cunning, someone whose motives have to be questioned and her own word cannot be taken as truth. The threat she poses for the investigation should be taken extremely seriously.

Only 6 articles were posted regarding Choi’s first court hearing, two of which are editorials. Just like *Hankyoreh*, her denial of all accusations made against her is mentioned several times. As stated previously, it is unlikely that anyone believed her to speak the truth, and this is made clear in the articles as well. *JoongAng* actually gives voice to ordinary citizens this time, by interviewing some of the people who came to witness her court hearing. Nationalist

sentiments appear here, as she's accused of making the entire democratic system of Korea fall:

"One spectator in their seventies, who arrived at the court today explained their decision to arrive: 'I wanted to see the face of the person who tore down the foundation of our country's democracy.' 'The nation, standing together as one, is working to make sure that a rightful judgment is made, so we plan to observe [the hearing],' one couple in their fifties said." [J043]

A lot is also written about the nation's anger towards her and the people's right to know the truth. The candle light vigils held at the time are also praised for keeping everyone alert and cautious, although no mention is made that these demonstrations were not only directed at Choi, but also Park.

However, *JoongAng* makes no historical comparisons, and Choi is not framed as someone very cunning and outright evil as she is in *Hankyoreh* articles, although she was framed as such before. Her refusal to properly answer questions is addressed as her "doing only what she wants to do and only saying what she wants to say" [J045], which sounds less purposeful than calling it a plot to stall the whole impeachment trials.

It's possible to argue that *Hankyoreh*'s statements simply go too far, that there is no evidence to back up what they write about her and that *JoongAng* is being more truthful. But whether claims and interpretations made are completely true or not, is not necessarily important for frames, and the purpose of this analysis is not to judge these articles for their accuracy. Blatant lies are one thing, but even if *Hankyoreh*'s conclusions were to be seen as unfounded or farfetched, it's unlikely anyone would try to refute them or feel that they're reaching too far, at least in this case. Like stated many times before, Choi was and still is very unpopular, and people are probably willing to believe almost anything about her.

As for her last court hearing, the coverage is far more extensive but not any more flattering. Just how with *Hankyoreh*, her refusal to answer questions is repeated in most articles and heavily criticized. The questions she was asked in court are reported on more detailed manner, and every time she does give proper answers or admits to anything, it immediately makes it to the headlines. Her claims are also often refuted with evidence or testimonials from others, which really only helps in framing her as a liar, although not a very good one. Her claims that the prosecution team and the interrogations have been too forceful and illegal are not paid much attention to, or given credibility to:

“Although she made claims about coercive investigation, when she was asked what kind of insults or abusive language were used, she only responded with: ‘If the hearing was not going to the desired direction, they would threaten me continuously, shove the documents in my face, raise their voices, and a lot of people would come in and create an atmosphere of complete terror.’

When the lawyers further questioned her about how the coercive investigation was done, Choi said that ‘It’s hard to even talk about it. I considered just killing myself but it was a situation where it felt impossible to do that, but it also was a situation where I felt I didn’t want to keep on living.’” [J058]

Even though the accusations she makes are quite severe, her answer is dismissed as too vague, especially because she seems to fail to properly answer the questions that she’s faced with. The accusations are not investigated any further than this, probably assuming that none of the readers would believe her words anyway. It is also possible that even if people would believe that she did really suffer and was treated unfairly, they might think that she deserved it.

Her appearance is also criticized in a couple of articles. She was wearing a hair pin that day that apparently was not appropriate. The headline of the articles just calls the hair pin “inappropriate” [J053] and it’s only mentioned later on in the article that the reason why it’s inappropriate is because it had a pointed end. Sharp or pointed objects are forbidden from people in detainment, and as such, she is not supposed to be wearing it. No explanation is given why she has such an item, leaving it open to interpretation if it’s her fault or not.

In any case, this is quite a small and irrelevant detail to pay attention to, and this really reflects how ready the media was to tear her apart. This is somewhat in line with how both *Hankyoreh* and *JoongAng* wrote about Park as well, when they wrote about her hairstyle and clothes, and their disdain for them.

Overall, *Hankyoreh* and *JoongAng* are quite similar in their frames for Choi. They both used the negative frame almost exclusively, and there’s never any doubt about her involvement in the corruption scandal. Both newspapers openly speculate her motives for returning to Korea so suddenly, and they both discredit most things she says in her court hearings. While *Hankyoreh* thinks that she’s more cunning and purposeful in her lies, *JoongAng* doesn’t frame her as quite that sinister, although both seem to agree that there’s nothing redeeming to be said about her. This is completely according to the hypotheses made earlier. Choi is someone who holds no real power over the media, so the newspapers do not have to fear for

consequences for writing about her, and the public opinion was also never in her favor. Thus, framing her in this negative perspective holds no risks for the newspapers doing so. The frames don't really change over time, starting from the very negative end of the spectrum and staying there the entire time.

4.2.3 Frames used for Lee

When the special prosecution team first issues an arrest warrant for Lee to the court on Jan. 16th, *Hankyoreh* mostly stands by the investigation team and defends their decision, although it does also dedicate articles to allowing Samsung and its allies to defend him as well. *Hankyoreh* stresses across most articles regarding this event that although the arrest of the vice-chairman could bring trouble to Samsung and consequently to the whole Korean economy, justice should always come first. This is what the investigation team said as well when it announced its decision to seek to arrest Lee, and it gets repeated several times in the sample.

“As the special prosecution team stated, the national economy is important but establishing justice is even more important. If we just let big companies give tens of millions of won in bribes and gain profits from it and let them control their business management through shortcuts and cheats [like bribery], then it will be extremely hard to any longer find any justice or order. – It's obvious that both the one who gave the money and the one who received the money should be punished.” [H026]

To further emphasize this point, *Hankyoreh* also interviews experts who say that the effect won't be as dramatic as people fear, and that the economy won't crumble just because of something like this. Rather than claiming that this poses no danger at all, *Hankyoreh* seeks to make the risks seem smaller and more manageable.

“However, Kim Sang-jo, the head of Solidarity for Economic Reform, who has been watching Samsung Group for a long time says that if vice chairman Lee is arrested it might have short term negative effects but he predicts that it won't go as far as a complete ‘breakdown’ of their business management. – After the news of the arrest warrant application were published in the afternoon, the Samsung Electronics shares didn't drop more than 2.14% despite the weakening market. During the Galaxy Note 7 crisis, the shares collapsed over 8%.” [H024]

Across all the articles, the arrest warrant issuance is overall seen as a positive thing, and Lee's innocence is brought to question, but some separate articles don't quite fit in with that general

picture. For example, *Hankyoreh* dedicates one whole article to people and organizations criticizing the investigation team and supporting Lee and Samsung, without refuting their words or raising opposing points in that same article, which can be seen as a positive Samsung/Lee frame. Allowing Samsung's statements to go unchallenged is a deliberate choice to make. Had the statements been refuted in any way, this would fit the negative frame or even the mixed frame, but allowing them to be expressed as is can only be understood as positive.

If a reader was to read all these articles, they would see how *Hankyoreh* seems to be in favor of arresting Lee and suing him for his alleged crimes, but if the reader was to read only one or two articles which defer from this view, they might get a different idea. With Park and Choi, there is a more unified frame being built, where almost all articles across the sample portrayed the same kind of frame, so it is interesting that the opposite occurs in relation to Lee.

When the arrest warrant fell through on Jan. 19th, *Hankyoreh* calls it a failure on the part of the prosecution team, because they failed to collect solid evidence that the money Lee paid 'was given with expectations attached'. That is to say, they failed to prove that the money was paid as a bribe. But at the same time, *Hankyoreh* dedicates a lot of time to proving that these allegations were indeed justified and true. It blames the court for caving in in front of a big chaebol, and openly questions if Lee would have been arrested had he been any ordinary person. *Hankyoreh* openly supports the investigation team and demands it to keep pushing forward.

"It looks like [the judge] considers that the proof for the criminal charges against vice chairman Lee is not yet enough." [H042]

"We can't help but ask, if Lee wasn't the leader of Samsung, would his arrest warrant have been dismissed in such an important situation. – At this rather, people will think that the court has surrendered in front of the chaebol's economic power or that this is 'Samsung Republic', among other things. Because of the court, the nation's disappointment can't help but grow. – Without faltering, the special prosecution team has to give their all in their investigation into the truth." [H046]

This time, it lets Samsung's side of things only be heard in one article, while the rest remain very critical of it. A lot of nationalist sentiments are invoked once again, as they lament the 'chaebol system' still holding too much power over the Korean society, and stress the fact

that this does not fit the sense of justice and fairness of the Korean people. Thus, the negative Samsung/Lee frame is built partially on the idea that criticizing or even attacking Samsung or Lee is for the welfare of the people, and the country's democracy and fairness of the judicial system. Even though this could all damage Samsung's success and as such also damage the growth of the economy, it is too important for the ideals of justice and democracy to let it slide.

"Mayor Park posted on his own Facebook page criticizing the court's decision in the morning of Jan. 19th: 'I have objections. It's hard to understand the reasoning behind the dismissal of Samsung vice chairman Lee's arrest warrant in the court house even when 'there's room for legal debate'. In a society where there's one law for the poor and another for the rich, there can't be any justice.' He added, 'This doesn't mean that the nation's desire to reform the chaebol system and to make this into a just country has been dismissed. This doesn't mean that the chaebol's crimes have vanished either. The reason for the arrest warrant request from the special prosecution team is still based on the nation's orders.'" [H043]

"'Vice chairman Lee, who should have absolutely been arrested, walks free. The law surrendered once again in front of the power of the chaebol', Seongnam's mayor Lee Jae-myung criticized the judicial branch. An Cheol-su wrote on his Facebook page: 'If he had been any other person, would the warrant have been dismissed? If all people are not equal before the law, then where can we seek for justice? The court cannot take the side of the mighty when giving their judgments.'" [H050]

Building this negative frame of Samsung and Lee on these kinds of nationalist sentiments and high ideals makes sense, because the positive frame of Samsung and Lee seems to be founded upon similar abstract concepts. These ideals in favor of Samsung and consequently Lee, mostly seen in *JoongAng*, are built on the view that what is best for Samsung is also best for the Korean economy, and thus all of its people. This stems from the kind of thinking where economic growth and success are seen as more important than ideals of democracy and equality.

It's not outlandish to assume that to at least some Koreans continued economic growth or at least stability is far more important than democratic ideals. In 2001 Korea Democracy Barometer survey, respondents were asked to choose two values out of four options that they thought were most important in a democracy. Economic prosperity was chosen by 68% of respondents, economic equality by 47% of respondents, while political freedom and

participation were each chosen by 39% of respondents. When the respondents were asked to choose between two national goals of economic development and democratization, 63% chose economic development while only 10% chose democratization. The rest, 27% of respondents, chose both as equally important. (Doh 2003, 50-51.)

While this is an old survey, I could not access any more recent data on these specific questions although the Korea Democracy Barometer surveys have been carried out regularly since then. It is possible these questions weren't asked again and that is the reason why I couldn't find anything more recent on the topic, but I cannot say this for certain as I do not have access to their database. These numbers are quite telling, however, even if slightly outdated and given the other data from the surveys that I could access, the trends have stayed quite stable in most values measured in the surveys (Democracy Barometer 2014). Although this particular survey is too old to use to draw solid conclusions of the present day, we can still see here how economic values have reigned supreme over purely democratic values in the past. This could also help explain why Samsung is defended with arguments very much directly related to economic prosperity and development.

As follows, the only viable way to argue against that is to find something else equally as powerful. If the positive Samsung/Lee frame is built on the idea of economic values and their importance for the wellbeing of the nation, the so-called Samsung ideology mentioned in chapter 2, then the negative Samsung/Lee frame has to find something that would outweigh those economic values in the wellbeing and happiness of the Korean people. For *Hankyoreh*'s negative Samsung/Lee frame, it means stressing values of justice and fairness, and also highlighting how shameful it is that even law fails in front of the powerful chaebol. It portrays this as something everyone agrees on, that every Korean wants to see the chaebol owners to be treated like any other ordinary citizen in front of the rule of law.

On Feb. 17th, when Lee is finally arrested, *Hankyoreh* openly celebrates the hard work the investigation team put in to make it happen. It also dedicates an entire article to praising the judge in charge of the arrest warrant hearing, praising his dedication and how seriously he took this issue. This is most probably done to make the arrest look as justified as possible. *Hankyoreh* also stresses the fact how important this is for the impeachment trials, as well as eventually suing Park for corruption as well. Lee's arrest is seen as confirmation that Park is guilty as well, and while these bribes were not the only reason for her impeachment, this confirmation is seen as helpful for that cause as well.

“The special prosecution team gathered some 50 pages as arrest warrant documents, and some 300 pages of other written documents, and Han Dong-hun, the head of the investigation who was in charge of the investigation for the arrest warrant hearing on the 16th, even personally gave a presentation [in the court].” [H075]

“Even though the first arrest warrant hearing was only [the first] step, the fact that it was recognized that there is proof of these criminal acts and he should be arrested means that vice-chairman Lee’s arrest has made it possible to confirm the charges against president Park in the bribery case. This means that she is finally a suspect for having received 43.3 billion won from Samsung as bribes.” [H078]

“As the news of vice-chairman Lee’s arrest were made known on the 17th, president Park’s side did not give any statements yet could not hide their embarrassment. They now stand in fear that vice-chairman Lee’s arrest will help strengthen the special prosecution team’s investigation into the bribery allegations in regards to president Park.” [H081]

Hankyoreh also dedicates an entire article to describing how Lee’s life will be like in jail. This also happens with Park when she was arrested. It’s obviously very humiliating to someone of such immense wealth, but probably also seen as something fair and just by *Hankyoreh*’s readership, to have the rich chaebol heir be finally treated like an ordinary person. It also fits the demands made earlier that Lee should be treated like any normal citizen and not be given any special privileges as a chaebol family heir, at least in front of the rule of law. He has now been arrested, like any normal person should be according to *Hankyoreh*’s narrative and frame, and he will be continuously treated like any other prisoner.

“The arrest warrant hearing ended earlier on the 16th and early this morning at 5.35 a.m. after his arrest warrant had been issued, vice-chairman Lee, who had been kept under custody in the Seoul detention center, went through the process of entering a jail like any other arrested suspect. After checking his identity identification, he went through a simple health inspection to see if he had any infectious diseases etc., and a physical inspection. After handing in his phone, cash, and other belongings, he put on a prisoner’s uniform with his prisoner number on his chest, received instructions on rules living in a prison as well as toiletries and such, and headed to his prison cell.” [H080]

Overall, then, while *Hankyoreh*’s frames on Lee are more varied than on Park or Choi, there are still some reoccurring themes and elements to the paper’s portrayal of him. *Hankyoreh* does give Samsung a chance to voice its side of things, and it doesn’t really critique it much

in the articles dedicated to conveying what Samsung representatives or other instances defending Samsung and Lee said. It's these articles that mostly confuse the frames used, as they can only be seen as in favor of Samsung/Lee, given that there's nothing in these articles trying to refute what they're saying. If these articles were criticizing Samsung's claims, this could be seen as part of the negative Samsung/Lee frame, but since they merely quote everything word for word in very neutral or at least non-confrontational language, it's hard to justify it as part of the negative frame.

The negative frame is mostly built on the idea that Samsung along with other chaebols should be held responsible for its actions. The frame suggests that Samsung and Lee have risen above the rule of law and to allow them to keep doing this is unjust and inexcusable in a modern, democratic country that South Korea should be. While Park is portrayed as the sort of evil that can only be defeated if the entire nation stands together, the fight against Samsung and/or Lee depends mostly on the judicial system and the investigative team looking to prosecute him. This is an interesting distinction to make. It also suggests indirectly that as much as it is out of the hands of the ordinary citizens, everyone at large agrees to the idea that Samsung holds too much power in the Korean society and that is not a good thing.

As stated earlier, this negative frame is built on quite opposing views to those used in the positive frame. But considering for example the 2001 Korea Democracy Barometer survey results mentioned earlier, and assuming that some of that holds true even today, it is unclear if this strategy works in anyone else but the minority that shares these views. But perhaps *Hankyoreh* assumes its readership to think this way, in which case this is of course an effective frame and strategy to use.

JoongAng's reporting on Lee and Samsung, as expected, is more varied and less critical or negative. This was to be expected, although with that being said, *JoongAng* is slightly more open with its criticism than what one might assume given its direct ties to Samsung.

On Jan. 16th, the next article following the announcement of the arrest warrant being applied for is an article saying how Samsung's stock dropped following this news. This fits right into the narrative that Samsung or Lee shouldn't be prosecuted, because it puts the company and thus the whole Korean economy into grave danger.

Although *JoongAng* does give the investigation team a chance to speak for itself, they still try to refute their claims with opposing statements from Samsung:

“In the eyes of the special prosecution team, president Park Geun-hye helped the Samsung merger happen in July of 2015 through the National Pension Service under the Ministry of Health and Welfare in return for this support [that Lee gave to Choi]. But as an answer to that, Samsung argues that ‘It was support that vice-chairman Lee had no choice but to give due to president Park and Choi’s coercion. It wasn’t ordered by vice-chairman Lee [willingly].’” [J063]

It doesn’t completely try to silence the investigation team, but doesn’t necessarily completely stand behind it either. Also, when *JoongAng* reports on how people and organizations commented on this, it does allow both ends of the spectrum speak for themselves, which is interesting to see. The total number of articles is very low, however, only 8 articles total, one of which was written about the investigation team leader’s stylish jackets and one article is simply asking netizens to write their opinions on this issue on a specific website.

The low number of articles compared to *JoongAng*’s usual volumes and the mixed frames used across these articles reflects a very cautious stance on the issue when the outcome of the arrest warrant was not at all clear. It’s obvious that they did not want to write about Samsung or Lee too negatively when there was no guarantee what would happen next. This reflects the general stance Korean media has taken in the past on controversial topics like this, as was discussed in chapter 2, and as such, it is not at all surprising.

When the arrest warrant is then turned down by the court on Jan. 19th, *JoongAng* does not even try to hide the fact that it stands with Lee and Samsung. It writes very openly that Lee “luckily avoided being arrested” [J068] and writes in depth about the problems Lee’s arrest would have brought to Samsung and how devastating that would have been. Lee’s irreplaceable role in Samsung and its success is mentioned several times and explained in great detail, stressing his exceptional abilities and networks as well:

“‘Vice chairman Lee’s most important role is to analyze the markets and meet famous CEOs while travelling the world, and in that way map out and plan the future of Samsung Electronics. In this, his global network is absolutely crucial,’ a Samsung representative explained.

Vice chairman Lee has taken on tasks that [other] executives can’t do. For instance, he’s been meeting international leaders such as China’s head of state Xi Jinping and diplomatically negotiated about private sector issues, and even discussing with CEOs of companies such as Google or Apple to figure out the action plan for his company. As of late, vice-chairman Lee personally takes care of even recruiting global talents for the company.” [J068]

It's also mentioned several times how Lee headed straight back to the company to work after he got out of the court house, despite spending the whole night there without rest. This is probably to help frame him as someone hardworking and who puts the wellbeing of his business first. Lee is portrayed as dedicated and focused, who doesn't let unfair events such as this arrest warrant get in his way. This is a powerful image of a competent, dedicated business leader.

A whole article is dedicated to the judge who made this decision, praising him and highlighting his credentials to frame his decision as justified and right. Some articles do quote people who disagree with the court's decision to not arrest him, but more attention is given to those who agree with it. It's also reported how Samsung's stock started to rise again, adding to the positive Samsung/Lee frame to show the positive effects of this event.

There are also a lot more articles written about this than there were on Jan. 16th. Additionally, there's one editorial in the sample as well, and its author very openly stands with Samsung and Lee. In the editorial, the author very strongly insists that the special prosecution team should only focus on prosecuting Park and Choi, and not try to extend the investigation into the chaebols connected with the scandal:

"This arrest warrant refusal should overall be taken as a chance to restore the direction of the investigation. Above all, the special prosecution team needs to restore the focus of their investigation from 'corporation investigation' back to the original 'Park Geun-hye and Choi Soon-sil government monopoly' direction." [J079]

From all this, it's very obvious how *JoongAng* frames Samsung and Lee in a positive way, while criticizing the investigation team for going after them. While some critical opinions are reported, a lot more focus is given to how fortunate it is that Lee wasn't arrested.

Once again, rather than making clear claims of Lee's innocence, the positive frame is built upon the fact how important Lee is to Samsung's success, and how important Samsung's success is to all of South Korea. Samsung is literally too big to fall. In this, *JoongAng* and *Hankyoreh* have their biggest differences.

When Lee finally is arrested on Feb. 17th, *JoongAng*'s frames become more mixed. Perhaps surprisingly, it doesn't attack the court or the investigation team at all, but rather dedicates quite a bit of attention to explaining why the arrest warrant was successful this time around, making it seem more rational and reasonable. It also reports in length about the hard work the

investigation team put in to gather all the evidence it needed to make the arrest possible, which serves to support the positive frame of the investigation team:

“The special prosecution team put everything on the line for three weeks to gather proof and evidence for the bribery allegations against vice chairman Lee. – At the actual arrest warrant hearing, the special prosecution team brought in a whole suitcase full of documents to present their case.” [J092]

The hard work the investigation team put in is praised here, giving the arrest more credibility. It’s an odd contrast, given that it would fit the positive Samsung/Lee frame better to try and discredit the special prosecution team and the work they’ve done. *JoongAng* spoke against the prosecution team continuing to look into conglomerates on Jan. 19th, and carrying on down that path would have been quite easy to do.

It also reports on how Lee will be living his life like any other arrested prisoner, just how it did with Park as well. Again, prison life is a very humiliating change in lifestyle for the Samsung founder family member, although it’s possible that *JoongAng* wanted to rouse pity rather than glee in its readers. It’s impossible to tell, however, how the readers would have reacted to this.

But *JoongAng* does not completely switch its frames of Lee and Samsung. It reports on how the Samsung Group stock began to fall as the news of Lee’s arrest broke out and also describes Samsung’s reactions:

“The arrest of vice-chairman Lee leaves Samsung in shock

The first time in its 79-year-long history that its leader has been arrested has Samsung fall into a state of panic. – Even its normal, day-to-day business activities will be affected negatively.” [J091]

“Samsung Group’s is now in a state of emergency. If there is no leader in its control tower, pushing forward will become increasingly more difficult.” [J096]

The possible negative outcomes of this event are explored in depth, describing the possible perils that Samsung could now face, which is only befitting for the earlier narratives. Once again it is shown that Lee’s innocence is not what is important, but the state of his company is. Like before, his exceptional role in managing the company is highlighted time and time again, although it is quite hard to believe that a conglomerate the size of Samsung would be so incapacitated by just removing one person from its top-level management.

It also reports on comments in favor of the arrest, where a lot of nationalist sentiments are invoked once again. The politicians quoted insist that this is a new beginning for the Republic of Korea, that there's new hope for the whole nation, and how the judicial system has proven its fairness with this difficult decision. But there are still comments included from Samsung as well, so there's again a duality of opinions being showcased here.

The last article in the sample is an editorial insisting that just because Lee has been arrested, it doesn't mean he's guilty of anything. This is of course true, and typically in a fair justice system everyone is 'innocent until proven otherwise', but in this context, this seems like an obvious attempt at defending Lee, especially because no such statement is made in regards to Park and Choi, at least in the articles in the sample. It's quite telling that Lee should be considered innocent until proven guilty, while Park and Choi are framed as more or less guilty long before their trials even begin. No mention of 'innocent until proven guilty' are made in regards to the two women, whereas Lee is treated a lot more fairly.

5 Conclusions

The purpose of this last chapter is to summarize the analysis made in the previous chapters in a comprehensive manner, and coherently answer the research questions one by one. I believe that an attentive reader has already been able to find these answers, but I think that a comprehensive and systematic review is still in order.

First, how are articles concerning Choi framed by *Hankyoreh* and *JoongAng*? The simple answer is that they're framed very negatively by both of the newspapers. This is completely in accordance with the hypothesis made beforehand. Choi was and still is highly unpopular in the public eye, which is probably the biggest reason for this kind of frame. It would have been very odd for any newspaper to take her side, or to try and frame her more positively. There's very little to defend her with, and it's probable that the journalists felt the same kind of anger towards her as did the ordinary citizens as well. Also, the fact that she holds no power especially now after Park was removed from office, means that no newspaper or media outlet has to worry about possible backlash from writing about her critically or negatively. There is no reason for media to practice self-censorship when writing about her, because she cannot attack them back financially or legally.

Hankyoreh especially portrays her as very cunning and purposeful in all of her actions and lies. Everything that she says or does is scrutinized to the smallest detail, and her motives are

always being speculated even when there's little evidence to back up these speculations. She's a true shadow leader, who leaves nothing up to fate, and to the very last moment is still trying to manipulate those around her and the entire court process as well. Overall, she's framed as sinister and evil, someone well deserving of the people's anger and disappointment. Her daughter is also framed as a part of her criminal plans, despite her very young age when all of this was taking place. Choi is shown to be someone with no redeeming qualities, someone who's hungry for power and willing to use it to her own advantage.

JoongAng's frame of her is slightly different, even if just as negative. She's being framed as a liar and a shadow leader just like in *Hankyoreh*, but her actions and especially her alleged lies in the court hearings are not framed as purposeful and intentional as they are in *Hankyoreh*. While she's very much a target of tremendous anger and disappointment, she isn't quite the evil mastermind to *JoongAng* that *Hankyoreh* frames her as being. This could be either because *JoongAng* doesn't believe her to be that intelligent, that evil, or they're more hesitant to jump into conclusions than *Hankyoreh* is. Especially her refusal to answer questions in court is framed more as a weak attempt to avoid the charges, but not as something so carefully planned as what *Hankyoreh* claims it to be. Either way, both newspapers write about her in very negative frames.

Then what about the articles concerning Park? As expected, *Hankyoreh* is indeed also very negative in its writing about her as well. This is no surprise, given her political stance and how that contradicts *Hankyoreh*'s political alignment. *Hankyoreh* has no reason to defend her, and it probably hasn't defended her even with her past scandals like the Sewol-ferry incident. Nationalist sentiments are invoked as she's framed as someone who has endangered the very foundation of Korea's democracy and Korea's future as a nation, and her fall is celebrated openly and joyously. Her removal from office and her arrest are framed as a new beginning for all of Korea, as a country and a nation, and bold connections are drawn between her and past presidents who've also committed bad deeds in the past. Bringing her down required vigilance and effort from the whole nation, and the success of the candle light vigils and protests is seen as something empowering for all of South Korea. *Hankyoreh*'s frames of her stay consistent throughout the scandal.

Surprisingly, *JoongAng* doesn't stand by her to the degree that I expected before conducting my research. While *JoongAng* isn't as quick to attack her when the scandal broke out, and doesn't celebrate her impeachment the same way that *Hankyoreh* does, it still doesn't defend

Park either. Rather than using just the negative frame of Park, *JoongAng* employs the mixed frame more instead. Less attention is given to the public protests especially in relation to her impeachment, and when she's arrested, *JoongAng* portrays her as rather pitiful and weak, instead of rejoicing the end of her career and her imprisonment. She's not connected with the past presidents or even with her father, although the uniqueness of her situation makes headlines several times, probably to tempt more people to click on the articles.

Overall, *JoongAng* has a more mixed message when reporting on Park, although it grows more negative as the scandal progresses. It's not simple to say for sure why that might be; perhaps there was very little to defend her with, or perhaps *JoongAng* hasn't exactly agreed with her political views in the past, and thus isn't as avid of a supporter as other conservative newspapers might have been. To determine that, I would have to carry out further research into how *JoongAng* has reported on Park in the past, but unfortunately that is outside the scope of this thesis and will have to remain a future possibility.

There were also surprises in the frames used for Lee and Samsung overall. I did not expect *Hankyoreh* to attack Lee so openly, especially before his arrest, although the attacks against him were usually disguised more as positive frames and open support to the special investigation team working to arrest him. *Hankyoreh*'s open disappointment when Lee's arrest fell through was quite unexpected, although as I've stated before, the problem with deleted articles in *Hankyoreh* searches were only related to articles published about Lee. Thus, it could be that the newspaper had to impose self-censorship on itself later, in the fear of consequences or backlash.

To look further into this matter, I would have to be in direct contact with the *Hankyoreh* staff to ask them about it, but I doubt I would be so welcome to ask such questions especially on a topic so delicate. Nonetheless, it seems to me based on my sample, that *Hankyoreh* has gotten over most of its fear for Samsung and the possible negative outcomes of reporting negatively on the company and its leadership. This is a very positive finding given how crucial it is to have a press willing to expose the wrongdoings of the powerful in the society, be it in politics or in economy.

JoongAng, as expected, portrayed Lee more positively, and especially when his arrest warrant was refused, very openly supports the court's decision. But it is somewhat surprising to see even *JoongAng* willing to use the mixed frame along with the positive, giving some credibility to the special prosecution team and their investigation into Lee's actions. They could have

simply chosen to discredit them completely and try to make them look bad in an attempt to defend Lee more, but they chose not to do that. This is a positive finding in regards to press freedom and credibility, although it could also speak for the severity of the situation, and how the public opinion was like at the time; perhaps standing behind Lee and blindly defending him from the allegations would not have reflected well on the newspaper. But it is also very clear that *JoongAng* took a more cautious route in reporting about the issue, only getting slightly braver when Lee was officially arrested.

This fits with the general pattern on press and how they write about scandals described in previous chapters. The newspapers usually find the courage to write negatively about people in power only when it's crystal clear that the allegations made against them are true, in this case when Lee was arrested as a suspect. The frames growing more negative as the Lee case went on is true for both *Hankyoreh* and *JoongAng*. Still, the fact that *JoongAng* would give credibility to the opposing side, the special prosecution team, was a pleasant surprise and a tentative sign for how the Korean press continues to grow more mature and honest.

As my final thoughts, I think this thesis shows how important it is to consider the motives and connections each news source has both within the issues it writes about as well as businesses with economic, and sometimes political, interests. News and newspapers act as parts of discourse and are forever unable to move onto the higher plane of existence where objectivity would be a feasible goal, because within the limits of human language no such thing is possible. We often forget that news isn't objective but as we can see here, the way issues, events, and people are framed can change a lot from one media outlet to another. To gain a deeper understanding of the world, we have to seek knowledge from multiple sources to get closer to the truth.

As for what this means for the Korean media, it's even more important to understand why the newspapers write about certain issues the way that they do. Political alignments as well as economic interests, and powerful people entwined in these issues all play a role in how events are portrayed. It's a good sign, however, that there are tentative steps being taken towards more independent media that isn't afraid to go after even the big fish in the pond. While the Samsung ideology is still very much a thing that cannot be dismissed or ignored, as proven in the leaked text messages from August of 2017, there are still journalists out there who are willing to write critically about the company and its leadership. Hopefully once the negative changes made in press freedom under the Park administration are reversed, this could mean

that Korea's press can continue to fulfill its watchdog role not only in politics, but in economy as well.

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